THE RESISTANCE COLLECTORS' COVER

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE: ARE YOU WITH THE FIRST ORDER OR THE RESISTANCE?

STAR WARS®

THE FORCE AWAKENS

INSIDER

FEATURING

HARRISON FORD
CARRIE FISHER
ANTHONY DANIELS
PETER MAYHEW
DAISY RIDLEY
OSCAR ISAAC
JOHN BOYEGA
LUPITA NYONG'O
ADAM DRIVER
GWENDOLINE CHRISTIE
DOMHNALL GLEESON
J.J. ABRAMS
AND MORE!

TITAN
ISSUE #162
US $7.99
CAN $9.99
JAN 2016
Please display until 2/4/2016

© 2015 Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Used under authorization.

HAVE A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND!

TOPPS trading cards have been synonymous with the *Star Wars* franchise ever since the first movie was released way back in 1977. Many longtime fans have happy memories collecting cards with friends in the school playground. Many longtime fans still have their collections nearly 40 years later!

As the world has gotten bigger, so has TOPPS! Of course they still offer plenty of hardcopy cards to collect such as *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and *Star Wars Rebels*, but now you can collect and trade on your favorite mobile device.

There are a multitude of cool cards and exclusive images to amass with bonuses for collecting certain subsets.

The cards range from nostalgia-tinged-vintage reprints to vintage-style cards depicting characters and events from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens.* Amazing artwork from the great *Star Wars* artists and eye-catching designs make the cards even more collectible and desirable!

GETTING STARTED

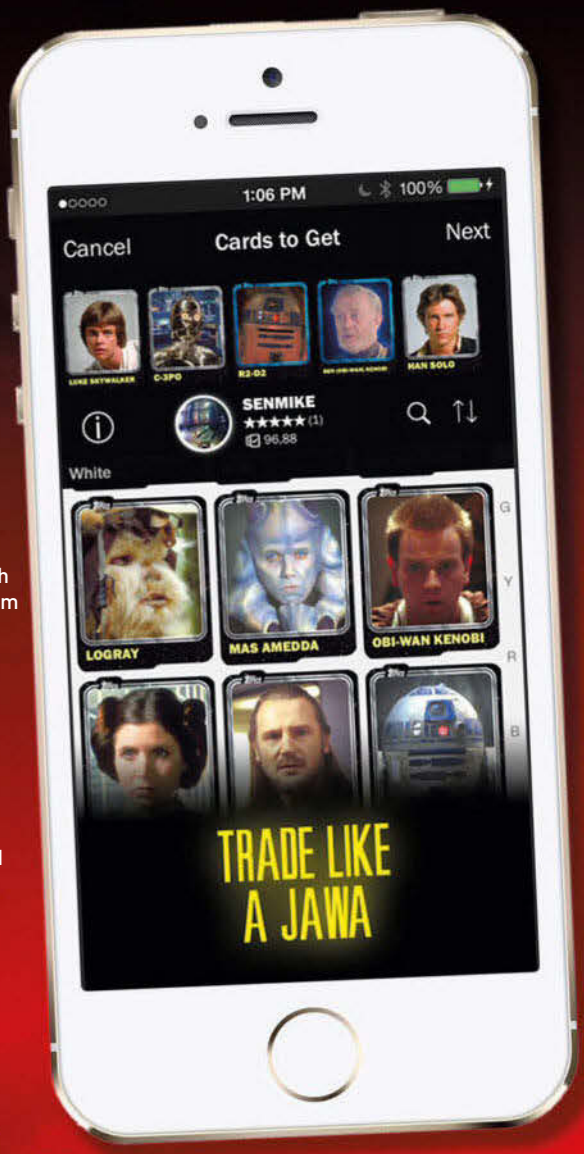
So how does it work? All you have to do is download the free app and everyday there will be 25,000 credits to spend on a multitude of different packs. It's simple, fun, and highly addictive. Each pack contains standard cards that form your base set, but if the Force is with you, you might just find a cool variant or even a collectable card. All the cards are numbered with the rarer cards numbering in the hundreds. There is, of course, opportunity to buy more credits to increase your chances to find that elusive card to complete your set.

If you can't find that stubborn card you need, then trading is the answer! With thousands of fans collecting all over the world, there is bound to be somebody who has the card—or cards—you are looking for! Send your trade cross your fingers, and you might just make a friend on the other side of the world!

MORE TO SAY

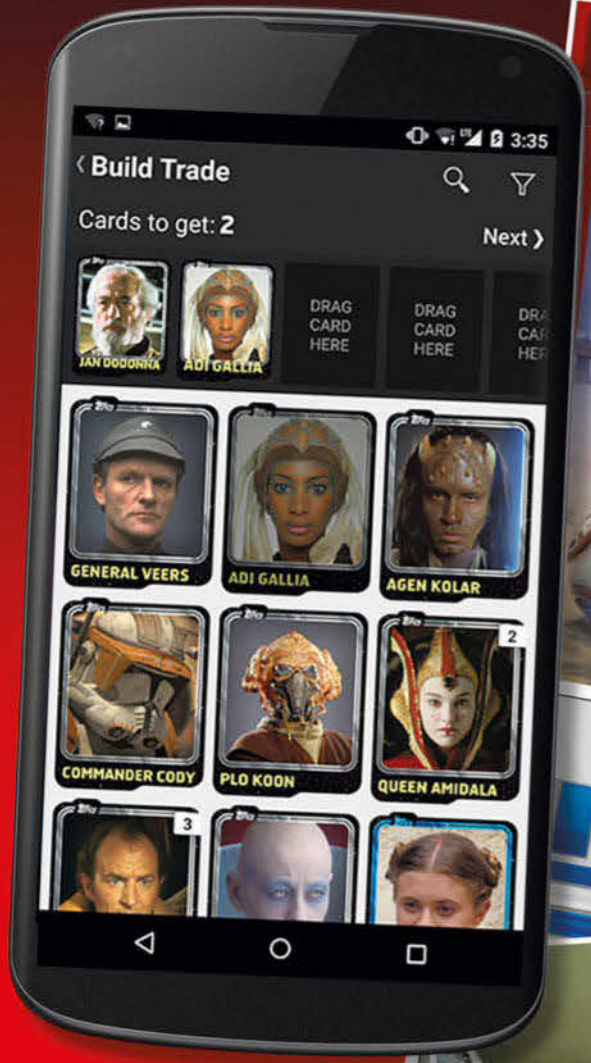
Search for TOPPS *STAR WARS* CARD TRADER

HAVE YOU?



DIGITAL DOWNLOAD!

Join up for free by downloading the *Star Wars* Card Trader app!



STAR WARS
CARD TRADER
BY Topps

Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google play

GET IT FOR FREE ON IPHONE, IPAD AND ANDROID

EDITOR'S WELCOME

"It's true. All of it."—Han Solo, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, 2015

There's no other way to say it. It's here, it's finally here! After years of waiting, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* is now in cinemas! And isn't it just awesome? The story is exciting, the action is exhilarating and the surprises are, well, surprising! Isn't it refreshing to go into a movie cold and get swept up by the power of *Star Wars* all over again?

This issue we've gone all out with our coverage of the movie... we hope you don't mind! This means that there just isn't room for our regular departments such as *Bantha Tracks*, My *Star Wars*, and Incoming but fear not, they will return next issue!

As always, we really want to hear what you think! What were the highlights of the film for you? Which characters did you like best? We'll be printing a special readers letters page in an upcoming issue and, if we print your letter, we will send you a First Order helmet coutesy of our friends at Rubies! OK, that's all we have time for... I need to see the movie one more time...!

May the Force be with you... Always.

Jonathan Wilkins, Editor

CONTACT US

email us:
starwarsinsider@titanemail.com

visit us:
www.titanmagazines.com
www.titanmagazines.co.uk

write to us:
UNITED STATES
Star Wars Insider, Titan Magazines, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL, 60503, U.S.A.
UNITED KINGDOM
Star Wars Insider, 144 Southwark Street London SE1 0UP, U.K.

call us:
To subscribe in the U.S. please call toll free on 800-999-9718
For U.K. and all other destinations please call 0844 322 1280 or +44 (0) 1795 414 810

Star Wars Insider is also available online. To download, visit: www.titanmagazines.com/digitial

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/StarWarsInsider

twitter
Star Wars Insider @SW_Insider

Visit www.starwars.com

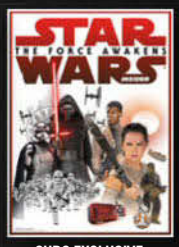
Subscribe today and get an exclusive subscriber cover with every issue—not available in stores! Plus, in this month's issue, get a free exclusive T-shirt and save up to 22% off the usual price.
This issue of *Star Wars Insider* is also available with an exclusive cover image that is available only at selected comic stores!
See page 43 or visit: titanmagazines.com/Insider

U.S. GET EIGHT ISSUES, SAVING 22%, FOR JUST $49.99!
U.K. GET EIGHT ISSUES, SAVING 20%, FOR JUST £27.99!

NEWSSTAND EDITION 1

NEWSSTAND EDITION 2

COMIC STORE EXCLUSIVE



SUBS EXCLUSIVE

DOCKING BAY THIS ISSUE....

INTERVIEWS

12 DAISY RIDLEY
18 HARRISON FORD
23 ADAM DRIVER
28 OSCAR ISAAC
34 CARRIE FISHER
38 JOHN BOYEGA
50 ANDY SERKIS
52 PETER MAYHEW
56 J.J. ABRAMS
82 LAWRENCE KASDAN
68 DOMHNALL GLEESON
73 GWENDOLINE CHRISTIE
78 LUPITA NYONG'O
80 KATHLEEN KENNEDY & BRYAN BURK
89 BB-8

PAGE 92
ALL-NEW TALE!
Star Wars: The Force Awakens' Grummgar stars in an exclusive story!

STAR WARS INSIDER
JANUARY 2015

Contact Us: [US] *Star Wars Insider*, Titan Magazines, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL, 60503, U.S.A.
Contact Us: [UK] *Star Wars Insider*, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP, U.K.

EDITORIAL
Editor Jonathan Wilkins
Senior Executive Editor Divinia Fleary
Art Editors Oz Browne, Robert Farmer
Assistant Editor Louisa Owen

LUCASFILM Ltd

Executive Editor J. W. Rinzler
Creative Executive Pablo Hidalgo
Image Archives Stacey Leong, Matthew Azeveda, Shahana Alam, Tim Mapp
Art Director Troy Alders
Bantha Tracks Pete Vilmur

CONTRIBUTORS
Amy Ratcliffe, Alan Dean Foster, Brian Rood

SPECIAL THANKS TO
The cast and crew of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, Erich Schoeneweiss at Random House, Tracy Cannobbio and Chris Argyropoulos at Lucasfilm

TITAN

Production Manager Obi Onuora
Production Supervisors Maria Pearson & Jackie Flook
Production Assistant Peter James
Art Director Oz Browne
Studio Manager Selina Juneja
Senior Sales Manager Steve Tothill
Subscriptions Executive Ben Alvarez Turner
Direct Sales & Marketing Manager Ricky Claydon
Brand Manager, Marketing Lucy Ripper
Commercial Manager Michelle Fairlamb
Advertising Assistant Sophie Pemberton
U.S. Advertising Manager Jeni Smith
Publishing Manager Darryl Tothill
Publishing Director Chris Teather
Operations Director Leigh Baulch
Executive Director Vivian Cheung
Publisher Nick Landau

DISTRIBUTION
US Newsstand: Total Publisher Services, Inc. John Dziewiatkowski, 630-851-7683
US Distribution: Source Interlink, Curtis Circulation Company
UK Newsstand: Comag, 01895 444 055
US/UK Direct Sales Market: Diamond Comic Distributors

SUBSCRIPTIONS
US subscriptions: 1-800-999-9718, email: customerservice@magazinefulfillmentservices.com
UK subscriptions: 0844 322 1280 email: swmag@servicehelpline.co.uk

For more info on advertising contact
adinfo@titanemail.com

STAR WARS INSIDER JANUARY 2015
(USPS 003-027) (ISSN 1041-5122)

Star Wars Insider is published eight times per year (January/February, March, April, May/June, July, August/September, October, November/December) by Titan Magazines, a division of Titan Publishing Group Limited, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP. Contents © 2015 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved, Titan Authorized User. TMN 13153

PUBLISHER'S U.S. AGENT
2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL 60503. Periodicals Postage Paid at Aurora IL and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to *Star Wars Insider*, PO Box 18479, Anaheim, CA 92817-8479
U.S. subscriptions
$49.99 per year; Canada $59.99 and U.K. $27.99.
Printed in the US by Quad.

© 2016 Lucasfilm Ltd. and ™ All Rights Reserved. Used Under Authorization.

DISNEY | LUCASFILM

STAR WARS™

SMUGGLER'S BOUNTY™

THE ONLY OFFICIAL STAR WARS SUBSCRIPTION BOX

100% EXCLUSIVE
EVERY BOX! EVERY ITEM!

$50 VALUE FOR ONLY
$25

INCLUDES *STAR WARS* POP! VINYL, COLLECTIBLES, APPAREL, ACCESSORIES AND MORE FROM THE ONLY OFFICIAL *STAR WARS* SUBSCRIPTION BOX!

JOIN TODAY AT
SMUGGLERSBOUNTY.COM

© & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.

LAUNCH PAD

ALL THE COOL NEWS FROM THE *STAR WARS* UNIVERSE

by Amy Ratcliffe

CINEMAS WORLDWIDE FEEL THE FORCE!

FANS IN FORCE FRIDAY FRENZY!

TICKET SALES RECORDS SHATTERED!

THE TRAILER SCORES 128 MILLION VIEWS ON DAY ONE!

AND NOW... *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS* IS HERE!

After a long wait, the much-heralded new *Star Wars* movie, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, hits cinemas around the world as this issue of *Insider* hits newsstands.

AN EPIC JOURNEY!

Here are some of the key dates as we headed toward the release of the movie...

JANUARY 25, 2013

StarWars.com announced that J.J. Abrams—known for his work on the television series *Lost* (2004-2010) and the hit blockbusters *Star Trek* (2009) and its sequel, *Star Trek Into Darkness* (2013)—would direct the film.

APRIL 29, 2013

Principal photography began as the cast for the movie is revealed. Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford, Kenny Baker, Peter Mayhew, and Anthony Daniels would return to reprise their roles from the original trilogy, and they would be joined by a number of new actors in leading roles: Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Adam Driver, Oscar Isaac, Andy Serkis, Domhnall Gleeson, and Max von Sydow. Further casting, including Gwendoline Christie and Lupita Nyong'o, would follow.

MAY 21, 2014

J.J. Abrams reported from the set to announce *Star Wars: Force for Change*, a brand new initiative from Disney and Lucasfilm, in collaboration with Bad Robot, dedicated to finding creative solutions to some of the world's biggest problems.

The campaign raises funds and awareness for UNICEF's Innovation Labs and innovative projects benefitting children in need.

As part of the charitable drive, a walk on part is offered to donators. The eventual lucky winner, was one D.C. Barns...

NOVEMBER 6, 2014

The official *Star Wars* Twitter account announces that the film had completed principal photography. The post gave the official title for the film as *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

NOVEMBER 28, 2014

With just over a year to wait, a brief 88-second teaser whetted our appetites.

APRIL 17, 2015

The teaser for *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* made its bow at *Star Wars* Celebration Anaheim. Excitement reached fever pitch as Han Solo and Chewbacca were revealed aboard the *Millennium Falcon*.

SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

Star Wars Force Friday saw fans racing to stores as the first wave of goodies for the new movie were released!

OCTOBER 18, 2015

The poster for ***Star Wars: The Force Awakens*** was revealed.

OCTOBER 19, 2015

The final trailer was released and the advance box office opened!

MORE TO SAY

So, over to you guys! We'd love to hear your thoughts on the new film. Write in to the address on page 4 and tell us your thoughts on the new movie!

HAVE YOU?

GIFT GUIDE!

WHAT BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE THE SEASON OF GOODWILL TO ALL THAN BY SHARING SOME *STAR WARS* MAGIC WITH YOUR NEAREST AND DEAREST!

TO INTERACT WITH:

RADIO CONTROLLED ACTION!

Let *Star Wars* characters loose as Bladez Toyz' Radio Controlled Inflatable toyline, that began with R2-D2 in 2012, continues with Darth Vader and Yoda.

The characters feature sound effects and built-in lightsabers, which will allow users to battle against each other in the ultimate fight of good and evil!

Both feature 2.4Ghz controls, enabling up to 10 remote controlled characters to race against each other using individual frequencies, providing hours of fun for everyone!

www.bladeztoyz.com

COMMAND YOUR OWN EMPIRE!

Thinkway Toys' stunning range of interactive toys features key characters from the movies such as Darth Vader, Chewbacca, and the saga's latest bad guy, Kylo Ren! Look out for an amazing range of ships, including the *Millennium Falcon* drone!

www.thinkwaytoys.com

TO WEAR:

FESTIVE KNITWEAR!

Get in the festive spirit with seasonal knitwear! A series of great designs including AT-ATs, X-wings, Darth Vader, and even the Emperor wishing us all a "Merry Sithmas!" Get 10% off by using the exclusive promo code "INSIDER10"

www.yellowbulldog.co.uk

TO PLAY:

STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT

Tear the galaxy apart in the action-packed videogame featuring challenging campaigns, frantic battles, and the chance to play as Princess Leia, Darth Vader and more! The game is out now in various editions, including a deluxe PlayStation version that includes bonus classic *Star Wars* games!

www.ea.com/StarWarsBattlefront

DISNEY INFINITY 3.0 *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS* PLAY SET

Explore the new worlds of the latest movie with this exciting new Play Set that arrives with stylish figures of Rey and Finn.

infinity.disney.com

TO BUILD:

ASSEMBLE YOUR FLEET!

Become a starship builder with these stunning model kits from Revell!

The Build & Play *Star Wars* range features easy-to-assemble construction toys that snap together, and no glue, paint or tools are needed for assembly. Each toy features three different sound clips and light effects. The range includes the *Millennium Falcon*; the First Order Special Forces TIE Fighter; Poe Dameron's X-wing Fighter; and the Resistance X-wing Fighter.

Revell also offer impressive new Easykit *Star Wars* models: Authentically pre-painted kit parts that clip together with no gluing required. The range includes even larger versions of the Build & Play model kits, plus Kylo Ren's Command Shuttle.

Also available are *Star Wars* model kits. These challenging model kits in various scales require gluing and painting. Featuring finely engraved surfaces, replica cockpits, selected figures and display stands, the range includes the *Millennium Falcon,* the X-wing Fighter, Darth Vader's TIE Fighter, a TIE Fighter, TIE Interceptor, and a Snowspeeder.

www.revell.de/en

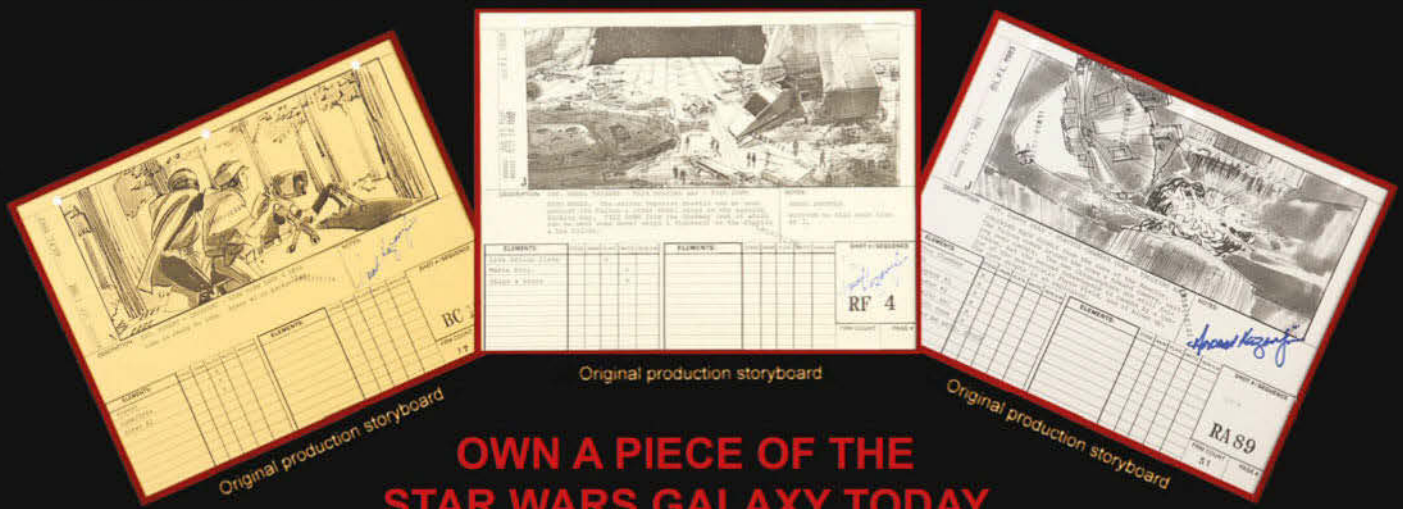
A THEME PARK NOT SO FAR AWAY

Star Wars will be making a huge splash at Disney theme park in the near future with a whole land devoted to showcasing the galaxy far, far away, but Disney is celebrating with a special event in the meantime. "Season of the Force" kicked off on November 16 at Disneyland Resort with a *Star Wars* Launch Bay full of galleries, a sneak peek at *The Force Awakens*, and special character meet and greets. The event also includes an updated Jedi Training Academy experience featuring characters from *Star Wars Rebels*, a new destination in the Star Tours: The Adventures Continue attraction, themed food and merchandise, and an X-wing overlay for Space Mountain, now temporarily called Hyperspace Mountain.

Prop Store®
Ultimate Movie Collectables
London - Los Angeles

Original props, costumes & production material from...

STAR WARS



OWN A PIECE OF THE STAR WARS GALAXY TODAY

www.propstore.com
(UK) +44 1494 766485 • (US) +818 727 7829 • (e) support@propstore.com

STAR WARS REBELS RUNDOWN!

Season 2 of *Star Wars Rebels* returned in October and is almost halfway through. The *Ghost* crew has faced threats in the form of the Empire and the Inquisitors sent after them by Darth Vader. We caught up with the cast and supervising producer Dave Filoni before the return of the clone troopers in "The Lost Commanders" to discuss the growing Rebellion, the dynamic between Kanan and Ezra, and Hera's role in the season ahead.

One of Hera's biggest obstacles has been convincing Kanan it's safe to place confidence in the militaristic system the burgeoning Rebellion has in place. She got them to this point, and actress Vanessa Marshall says Hera, "follows more orders rather than giving them this time. She still runs her ship very tightly, but I think she becomes part of a greater machine that's necessary to fight the Empire." Marshall emphasizes that Hera has trained the crew and has to believe all will unfold as it should. She has to give herself over to trust since Hera has been quite occupied being the getaway driver. Marshall says, "Given that the evil is so incomprehensible to combat the growth of the Rebel Alliance, it's scary for her to sit around and wait. She's also filled with a ton of relief every time they make it back."

Hera's determined nature was a key influence upon Ezra in Season 1, as was Kanan's training. Kanan and Ezra have a somewhat different dynamic this season that was on display as early as the first clone episodes. Filoni says, "What's interesting is that he's [Kanan] introduced this big world to Ezra, and now two things have happened for Ezra where he's learning that it's a bigger world and the evil is actually worse than he thought. He believed the Inquisitor was level ten, but Vader's, like, level fifty. That's terrifying. So, what does it mean that he's taken on this responsibility to say, 'I'm going to be a Jedi?' The consequences of that are actually terrifying. Because if you say, 'Hey, I want to be a Jedi,' there are a bunch of people that say, 'Oh hey, we want to destroy you.'" Filoni adds that Kanan's teachings are being put to a good use by Ezra.

The youth is a little more open-minded than Kanan. Kanan actor Freddie Prinze Jr. says, "Kanan's definitely going to be the more hesitant one. And Ezra is in the middle of puberty. He has the strict parent [Kanan] and the cool uncle [Rex]. Who are you going to go to? You're going to go to the cool uncle who lets you shoot guns and takes you out and shows you how to hit targets. He's way cooler than the guy that says, 'No, you're going to finish your vegetables.' There's going to be more conflict there, but it helps Kanan grow as a master. It helps Kanan grow as a Jedi. It helps him let go, which is the most important thing for Jedi to do in order to grow."

Prinze also explains how Kanan will grow in the upcoming season: "At the end of Season 2, Kanan is a much, much different Jedi—physically, spiritually, mentally, in all ways of the Force. It's night and day. People mistakenly called him a master in Season 1, but you can't even call him a Jedi Knight." Prinze discusses how Kanan didn't really go to school, and that his best teacher so far has been the Inquisitor, as twisted as that is. Prinze says, "It's much more hardcore than any training that Anakin or Ahsoka or any other Jedi had to go through because there's no structure for him."

Prinze continues, "At the end of the second season, you'll see much more of the regimented form of the Jedi start to take place, and that's going to advance his growth at a heightened level. And you learn there is more than *a* Jedi—that there are Force-sensitive people like Ezra, there's Ahsoka, and you'll see some other characters that show themselves in very strange ways directly connected to Kanan and his growth. About halfway through, people will start to go, 'Oh yeah, Kanan's getting legit.' And then by the end of Season 2, with what he's forced to deal with—I don't tell this to anybody—but with what he's forced to deal with and with what happens to him, you know, no matter what the cost, no matter what the sacrifice, if we're fortunate enough to keep going, he's going to be a force to be reckoned with."

WHERE TO SEE THEM NOW....

Your regular update on where to see and hear your favorite *Star Wars* actors.

Vanessa Marshall (Hera Syndulla, *Star Wars Rebels*) voices Gamora, and **James Arnold Taylor** (Obi-Wan Kenobi, *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*) voices Yondu and Cosmo on the Disney XD animated series, *Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy*.
Mark Hamill will reprise his role as James Jesse, a.k.a. the Trickster in Season 2 of *The Flash*. He'll appear on The CW series in December.
Keep your ears peeled while playing *Star Wars*: Battlefront to hear familiar voices such as **Tom Kane** (Admiral Ackbar and Yoda) and **Anthony Daniels** (C-3PO).

topps

STAR WARS
THE FORCE AWAKENS
TRADING CARDS

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS
SERIES 1 TRADING CARDS!

Featuring characters and storylines from *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*

LOOK FOR RARE AUTOGRAPHS, SKETCH CARDS, AND STORMTROOPER ARMOR PIECES!

topps STAR WARS © & ™ Lucasfilm, Ltd. Topps is a registered trademark of the Topps Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Topps does not, in any manner, make any representations as to whether its products will attain any future value. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. For a chance to get an insert, see pack for details.

DAISY RIDLEY IS REY

NEWCOMER DAISY RIDLEY MAKES HER DEBUT AS REY, A SCAVENGER ON THE PLANET JAKKU.

***Star Wars Insider*: How did you first hear about the part of Rey?**

Daisy Ridley: The first time I actually heard about this I was with some friends. One is a makeup artist and the other is a stylist. Somebody said, "Did you hear *Star Wars* is coming out?" I immediately emailed my agent, and said that I really needed to be seen for this. I don't know why; I just had this weird feeling. I wound up getting an audition. So, for the first audition I was an hour early. Literally pacing up and down outside. I'd never been nervous like that before. It was the first time in an audition process that I felt everyone was rooting, not for me, but for the idea of an unknown actor getting the part.

Did you know you were going for the lead?

I knew it was a big part, but I didn't know that it would be the lead. I didn't know what Rey's journey would be and where she would end up. It was only when I read the script that I realized the enormity of things, not only for her, but her place in the whole story.

How did you find out you got the part?

My last audition was really amazing. A few days later, I knew I'd hear from J.J. Abrams, and my phone was broken. I didn't get the call. I didn't know what was going on. I finally got through to him, and he told me I'd be starring in *Star Wars*! I was outside a theater where my friend was in a show, of which I missed the first half while all this was going on. I remember kicking a bottle on the ground like everything had changed. But it was all the same. And then I had to watch the rest of the show. My phone died. I couldn't call anyone. I sat on the Tube [the London Underground] going home not able to tell anyone for an hour! Then,

Clockwise, from top: Rey on Jakku; Daisy Ridley as Rey brandishes her staff; on the run with Finn.

finally, I told my mum and sister. But, it didn't really kick in for months.

How did you tell your family?
I burst the front door open and went, "I got *Star Wars*!" When I told my dad, who was asleep at the time, he just swore. That's how it happened.

How was that time for you, when you wanted to tell the whole world and couldn't?
The time between knowing and the announcement was so strange. I was thinking about it as if I were pregnant, like I couldn't tell anyone until the three-month mark. It was originally a month, and it kept extending. My birthday was really hard. I sat with all my friends, and it was really hard not to say anything. As time went on, it got easier. My mum, dad, and sister knew, so I had that.

What does it feel like to star in a movie that has such global appeal?

I'm just starting to realize how big a thing it is. When J.J. Abrams told me I got the part, he said that my life was going to change. I could imagine it, but I couldn't feel it, until it began to happen. The people who have done it before are coming back and it's like a family. So, I feel honored that I've been allowed to continue the journey with my part as well as being part of the team.

Were you a fan of the franchise?
I remember being in the cinema and watching one of the films and being terrified. But because I was younger than the first generation of *Star Wars* fans, it wasn't such a huge thing in my life—until now. But it does permeate popular culture. It's on magazine covers. It's referenced everywhere. But it was only until this year that it became a really big part of my life.

Who's your favorite character?
Luke Skywalker. I think of it more as a universal thing. He embodies so much of everyone. Everyone starts out on a path; then circumstances change,

Clockwise, from top: Sharing a moment with BB-8; pulling salvage on the remote world of Jakku; escaping from an explosive situation with Finn and BB-8; Rey loads her speeder.

and things happen, and you go to a new path. The thing that's always with him is the good. He's the good against the evil. He's looking out for Leia and Han Solo too. So, he's got other people's best interests at heart. The choices he makes are positively affecting, not only him, but the people around him as well. I think that's what so many people do in life and that's probably why I feel like that. He's someone I can relate to.

Do you have a favorite line from *Star Wars*?
It's from *The Empire Strikes Back*. Yoda tells Luke that he has to go in a dark cave. Luke asks Yoda, "What's in there?" And Yoda says, "Only what you take with you." That brings everything together; the idea that everything you have inside you hopefully will lead to good things. Luke, even at the end, hoped for the best in his father, and the best there was. So you have to give it to him that his hope held out.

What are the life lessons that *Star Wars* offers you?
Family is incredibly important, but I also think in fifty years time, I'll look back and really realize the life lessons that I learned from this part of the journey as kind of a whole. So hopefully, I'll learn some more life lessons on the way.

What will you bring to *Star Wars*?
I'm still early on in my life, let alone in my career. But, hopefully, I'll bring freshness and self-confidence, but with vulnerability. All the things that make me, that's what I'll bring to the character.

What would you like to impart to young girls on this journey?
I would say, be strong and be thoughtful and take care, and realize how you're affecting other people. Learn and grow and don't be scared if things are offered to you that you're not sure about, but that may change your life. Jump in feet first. Take everything you can and appreciate every day. Appreciate the people around you who support you and never feel on your own, because you never are.

Who is Rey and what is her role in the story?
Rey begins in her own world. She goes on this crazy adventure and meets Finn and BB-8, and she finally starts to make these bonds she's never had.

Can you talk us through your look?
We went through many versions of Rey's hair, and a few versions of her costume. When we finally decided on the hair, and I put the costume on, I could feel everyone react, that's how she should be. Everything is supposed to look like Rey put it together herself. So, the hair is the iconic three buns, which we call the three knobs! The costume is gorgeous. It's pretty, but she works in it. Everything she's got fits her perfectly. I put the costume on and I feel pretty badass.

Talk us through the training process.
I started stunt training just a few weeks after I found out. We did hand-to-hand and used boxing to warm up. J.J. wanted me to look like I work out. So I've been working on the upper body. That was four hours a day, four days a week for three

"REY BEGINS IN HER OWN WORLD. SHE GOES ON THIS CRAZY ADVENTURE AND MEETS FINN AND BB-8, AND FINALLY STARTS TO MAKE BONDS SHE'S NEVER HAD."

LAWRENCE KASDAN
ON DAISY RIDLEY

"We were very fortunate to get Daisy to play Rey because Daisy is an awesome physical specimen, yet at the same time she's a wonderful young actress who is learning all the time. You see this openness in the world, not just to the story she's in, but to acting itself. She's physically very impressive. This is a very demanding part physically. At the same time, she has this incredible beauty and a wit about her that we love from the tradition of British actresses. You feel this is someone who could be in these environments and survive, and that's not easy. These are tough environments and tough situations."

JOHN BOYEGA
ON DAISY RIDLEY

"Daisy Ridley is a hard worker. She's very serious and passionate about this. From the moment I met her, she was fixated on making this role believable and relatable. She's worked hard in collaboration with J.J. Abrams to make Rey loveable and soft, vulnerable, innocent, but at the same time you believe that Rey can become stern, and hard, and kick some butt! She's really strong, and it helps to have someone like that to bounce off of. We're able to collaborate in certain scenes and get the best laughs. It's been amazing not being a young lead by myself. I love the fact that it's a duo of leads. So, whatever experience we go through for the first time, it's both of us going through it. In real life and in the movie. The whole experience, the process, has helped create balance in the galaxy far, far away and on Earth!"

"IT'S JUST SO BIG. THERE ARE MOMENTS WHERE I'M LIKE, 'I'M FLYING THE *MILLENNIUM FALCON*!'"

J.J. ABRAMS ON DAISY RIDLEY

"We looked for a long time at many people. What we were looking for was someone who felt that she was capable of everything. It's a crazy thing, but this character needed to be brought to life by an actor that didn't have limitations. We needed someone who was going to be vulnerable, tough, terrified, thoughtful, sweet, and confused to take on the burden of this role and do it with authenticity. We needed someone who is able to go to this deeply emotional state and do it again and again, in some cases with brand-new actors; in other cases with actors that didn't exist at all, and in other cases, legendary actors. She needed to do all of this, and on top of everything, be an unknown. I didn't want someone who everyone knew who you had seen before.

To find someone no one knew, who could do all these things, took a lot of looking. Luckily we had our [casting directors] Nina Gold, Theo Park, and April Webster in the US working to help us find this person. It was a long search, as it needed to be. We found some great people, but it wasn't until we found Daisy that we thought we'd found the person who can do that sweet, light stuff; she has an incredible smile. She's beautiful. She could do the spirited stuff as well as the tough and emotional.

When she started doing fight training, she had such ferocity. She does this ferocious, gritting of her teeth, primal strength thing. On the one hand she's very relatable and delicate and new and innocent and, at the same time, she's insanely wise. And wildly tough. She's sort of limitless in what she can do. So, when she came in, it was clear we had someone who was going to be enormously special and make a big impact. We realized it had better be in this movie. She's too good to pass up."

months. Without the guys we're training with, there's just no way John Boyega and I would have gotten through Abu Dhabi! The running was so hard. It was a relief when there were explosions, because we needed a break from the running. I haven't stunt trained for a while, but I'm still fitness training to keep the levels up. There are such long days that you need the energy it brings.

What sorts of things do you do?

Stunt-wise, we'll do warm-up and sparring, and kickboxing. Then, I've been climbing. So, I started at a proper climbing wall, and now they have one on the stage. I really like it now. There were days when, if I slipped, my confidence was lost. But I really like it. It's so amazing doing something you haven't done before and feeling that you're gaining knowledge in it.

How was it training to fight with a staff?

We started the staff training with a wooden stick. I don't know how I did it; the adrenaline must have kicked in on the day. I never thought I'd be able to carry on as long as I did doing the fight sequence. The staff was fun. On the day of the fight scene, I was petrified. It was the first action thing I'd done. After the fight, I felt good. I felt like all the training had been for a good reason. In training, you feel like you're pushing yourself to the limit. Then, you get on set and push further. It's an incredible feeling.

What did you get out of the training?

I was really pleased with the training. Rey is an incredibly strong female character. I'd never climbed before; I'd never done fight training before. It's such an amazing feeling to scale a 30-foot wall, or get through a fight with an incredible swordsman. I feel like I held my own, and that's an amazing feeling.

Did you enjoy working in Abu Dhabi?

Abu Dhabi was really nice because we were able to go there a day early. John and I were taken around the mosque and palace, which

were really lovely. We had a couple of days to get used to the heat as well. It was so hot that you could literally feel the sand burning through your shoes. But, once you give in to the heat, it's okay. You know it's consistent; it's not going to change, so there's no point in fighting it. But everyone was so well looked-after.

When it got to the scenes where we had to run, the hardest part was when it was a mix of hard and soft sand. That was a killer on the legs.

The night before the last day of filming, that run was easier, but my lungs were really pushing it. It got hotter and hotter. You'd go from doing lots of stunt things, then to acting and intimate moments. Towards the end of Abu Dhabi, I looked back and thought, I've really come a long way since the beginning. I could do the first few days again.

How did you feel when you first stepped onto the *Millennium Falcon*?
What was so strange was that the crew was hundreds of people then suddenly it was just a few of us. It's such an iconic set and J.J. really wanted it to be perfect, so there was no mistaking what we're trying to create. It's just so big. There are moments where I'm like, "I'm flying the *Millennium Falcon*!"

How did Rey come to be so mechanically-minded?
Rey's always worked with machines. That's what she does and what she knows. When she winds up on the *Falcon*, she's never flown anything like it before. But she's grown up around mechanics, so she uses what she knows to get out of the situation, and start on her journey.

How did you feel about being on set with the legacy cast?
When I first met Harrison Ford, we just sat down for a coffee together. He was talking about his experience in the whole thing, not just Han Solo, but the *Star Wars* saga. Then we all had dinner together, which was great.

Was Chewbacca everything you dreamed of?
It's so funny seeing Chewie up close. He's got a little mustache that is lighter than his face. And, he's just so big!

Is *Star Wars* about family?
Yes, and the family theme translates everywhere. Even on set, it feels like a family. It's that feeling of bonding. Because Rey is trying to find her place in this world in the same way I was trying to find my place in the world, the similarities were really nice. I felt so welcomed and taken in, and people seemed to care how I felt, which translates into the Rey thing as well. She suddenly has these people who care about her.

Do you feel ownership over Rey?
I realized what this film might be to people. I hope that people will love it. I think they will. I feel like I'm working with my film family. Every day is fun. I haven't had one day where I didn't enjoy it. There are moments when I think how many people love Star Wars, and it's scary trying to fit into that world that people know so well and love so much. It's nerve-wracking thinking what Rey might represent to these people and whether they'll like her or not.

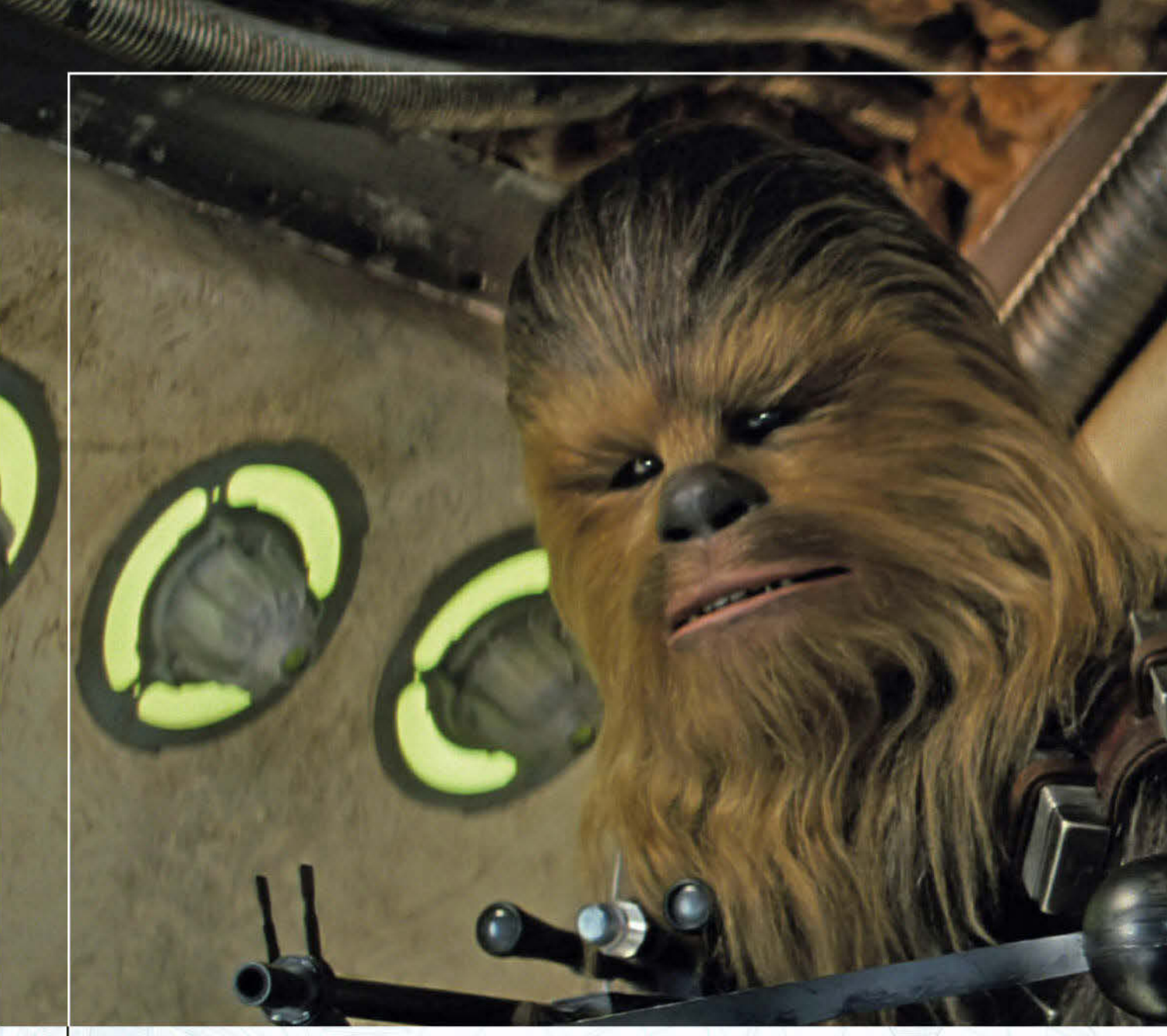
Was that the most surreal moment?
The first few months of doing the job was so surreal, I can't even remember some of it. I suddenly felt part of the excitement, part of something that people were going to love and people were excited to see again. You feel you're not alone. Everyone is part of this whole thing, trying to make Star Wars happen again in the best way. I think people are going to love it.

What is it that you want audiences to take away from the movie?
I'd love for people to feel the way we do working on it. There's such a good feeling about the film and what we're doing and the characters that are being made and formed in front of our eyes. I'd love for the audience to understand each of the characters' stories and connect with the new characters, and I hope that their love for the old characters returns even more than before. I'd love for people to leave the cinema thinking, aside from all the action and the fights, that it's an incredible story of people finding their place in a world.

ANTHONY DANIELS ON DAISY RIDLEY

"Daisy is taking on the mantle from the past films. I'm surprised she can breathe. She does more than breathe. I've seen her on set. She has taken to it. I envy that skill and the ease that she appears to have. The effort that goes on behind it is something else, but you don't see that effort. You see her absorb into a film set, absorbing it into her. I'm so admiring of her and John Boyega."

Clockwise, from top: Flying the *Falcon* with Finn; rescuing BB-8; Rey races across Jakku on her speeder!



HARRISON FORD IS HAN SOLO

AN INSTANT HIT WITH AUDIENCES, HARRISON FORD'S PORTRAYAL AS THE ICE COOL HAN SOLO LED TO A GLITTERING CAREER AS A LEADING MAN IN DIVERSE PROJECTS SUCH AS *BLADE RUNNER*, *WITNESS*, *WORKING GIRL*, *THE FUGITIVE*, AND, OF COURSE, THE *INDIANA JONES* SERIES.

***Star Wars Insider*: When did you find out that there were going to be new *Star Wars* films?**
Harrison Ford: It was a couple years ago, but I didn't see the script until I started getting involved.

Did you need persuading to come back?
I had a degree of self-interest. I was very gratified when I first saw the script and thought there were some amazing ideas; interesting things to do. Then I was very excited for the opportunity to work with J.J. Abrams again, whom I've known for a long time [Ford starred in *Regarding Henry* in 1991 which was written by J.J. Abrams].

You've known Kathleen Kennedy for a long time [working on the *Indiana Jones* films]. Was her involvement part of the attraction?
It's the story; it's the movie that's going to be made. Of course, people are a very important part of the mix and you have relationships with people that are very important. I have a very long and fruitful relationship with Kathy Kennedy, so I was glad to be able to work with her again. I thought it was going to be fun. I knew that it would be in good hands, but that wasn't the only attraction to the project.

What did J.J. Abrams tell you about his vision?
We had discussions about development of Han and his relationship to other characters in the story. They were very interesting and encouraging conversations. Then there was some work done in respect of the questions I had or input that I had with J.J. Abrams, and I was pleased with that. But I'm a "get on at the beginning and off at the end" kind of guy, so I don't really remember the street signs along the way.

Did you enjoy giving more input?
We all had a certain amount of input once we got started. Over the course of making the *Star Wars* films, we worked with three different directors and each of them had a different style and different attitude towards the process. I would say that the relationship with those three different directors was different, but I always felt that there was a degree of collaboration that was comfortable for everybody involved.

What does J.J. Abrams bring to the table as a director?
He's very thoughtful and very wise about human nature and the development of character and relationships. He brings a real sincerity and emotional

understanding to relationships, which is something I was very pleased to see. He's an enormously skilled filmmaker and a very efficient director and producer. So it has been a real pleasure to work with him and all of the members of his team as this film has gone on.

What was that like walking back onto the *Millennium Falcon* set.
I spent a lot of years here, so it was fun to see it again. I didn't remember it as well as I thought I did. There are things I remember about the cockpit and the funny stuff we went through. On the original cockpit, I asked George to let us get into it, so we could try it on for size. Finally, we did get a chance, Chewbacca [Peter Mayhew] and I, to walk into the cockpit. Of course, he couldn't get into the seat! Flying it developed a little bit between iterations of the first three films, but it started to come back to me. It was fun.

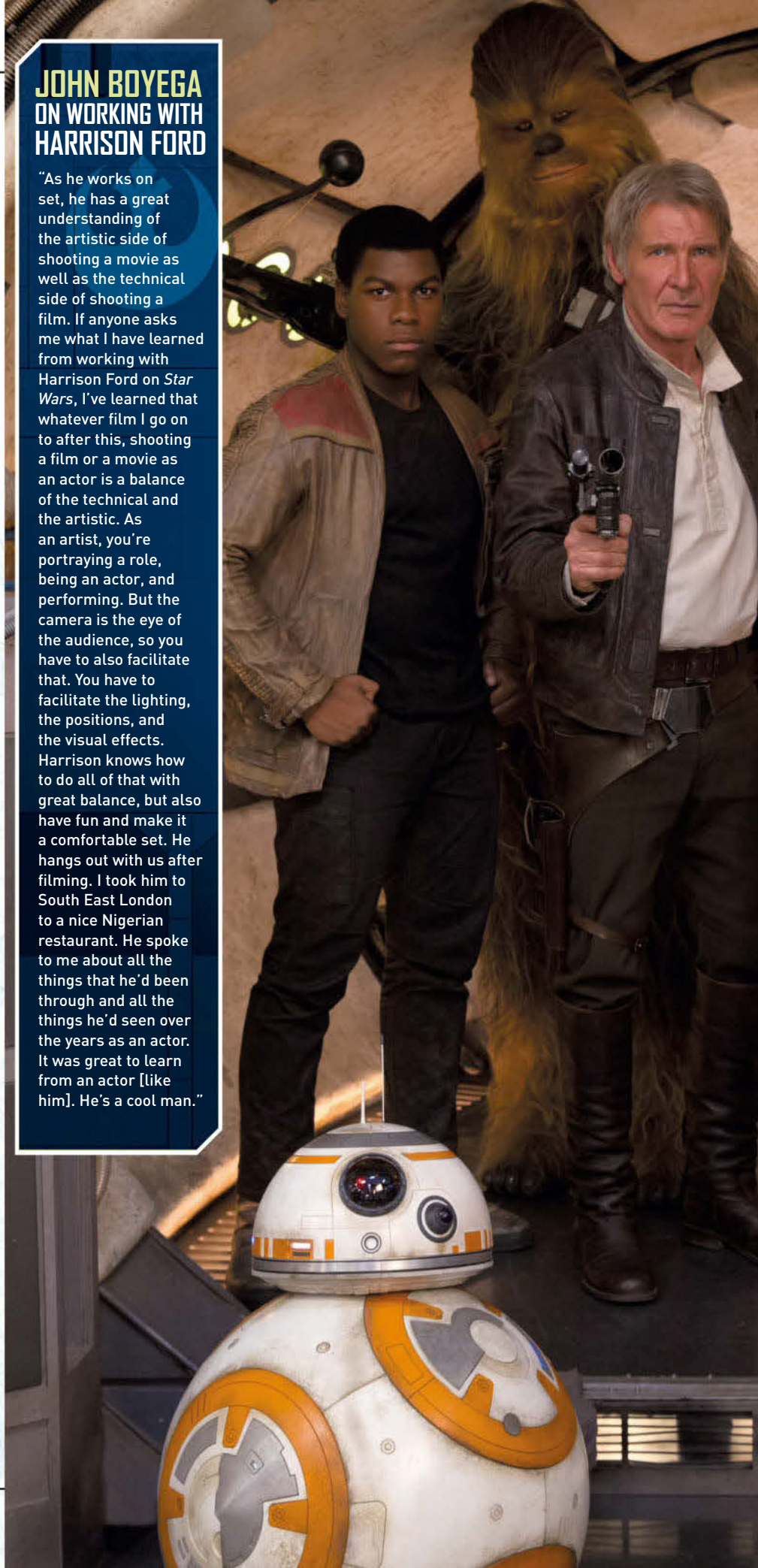
What about working with screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan?
Larry Kasdan has brought a lot of really fantastic opportunities to the character. And, he's been working with J.J. Abrams on the script for a long time. He continued to be with us on the set and came up with some great stuff. I'm happy we had Larry.

What is it like working with newcomers Daisy Ridley and John Boyega?
They are both very engaging personalities; both in their real lives and in their screen characters. I think the audiences will be

"FLYING THE *MILLENNIUM FALCON* DEVELOPED A LITTLE BIT BETWEEN ITERATIONS OF THE FIRST THREE FILMS, BUT IT STARTED TO COME BACK TO ME. IT WAS FUN."

JOHN BOYEGA ON WORKING WITH HARRISON FORD

"As he works on set, he has a great understanding of the artistic side of shooting a movie as well as the technical side of shooting a film. If anyone asks me what I have learned from working with Harrison Ford on *Star Wars*, I've learned that whatever film I go on to after this, shooting a film or a movie as an actor is a balance of the technical and the artistic. As an artist, you're portraying a role, being an actor, and performing. But the camera is the eye of the audience, so you have to also facilitate that. You have to facilitate the lighting, the positions, and the visual effects. Harrison knows how to do all of that with great balance, but also have fun and make it a comfortable set. He hangs out with us after filming. I took him to South East London to a nice Nigerian restaurant. He spoke to me about all the things that he'd been through and all the things he'd seen over the years as an actor. It was great to learn from an actor [like him]. He's a cool man."



"Chewie, we're home"

Instantly iconic, the sight of Han Solo and Chewbacca onboard the *Millennium Falcon* at the close of the first full trailer for *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* brought a lump to the throats and tears to the eyes of audiences around the world.

LAWRENCE KASDAN

"We were very pleased when we wrote that scene. There were so many moments in writing, and it took months and months of J.J. and I alone walking, talking, sitting, and writing. But we did it with a lot of walking around cities; Los Angeles, New York, Paris, and London. I've never written a movie that way. We were talking and recording, and then we'd go someplace and write it down. It was so much more fun than normal writing. We were sitting at a café in Paris, one of the famous cafés where Ernest Hemingway sat, writing *Star Wars*, with J.J.'s computer on the table. We wrote a lot of it walking around Santa Monica, ending up at the Palisades looking at the Pacific Ocean on a gorgeous day. We were doing all the difficult work of story construction, but we did it in incredibly pleasant circumstances. Once it was freezing cold, walking around Central Park. It was a heavenly experience."

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

"It was amazing for everybody. I was sitting by the monitors, near the door of the *Millennium Falcon*, and I turned around and there must have been 150 people from the crew who had all quietly gathered to get around the monitors and see that moment. It was very emotional. Everyone was feeling something slightly historic was going on. It really gave you chills."

LUPITA NYONG'O ON HARRISON FORD

"Working with Harrison has been precious. He knows this stuff. He's worked on this scale of film many times before. He has shorthand with J.J. and the crew. To see him have such control, and yet be so playful. That's been so fascinating. On such a big set, with so many moving pieces, it's easy to get overwhelmed and not know what's going on. But, Harrison always seems to know what's going on and zeroes in on that."

delighted to make their acquaintance and follow them through the story. They're both very inventive and spirited presences. Their characters are very interesting and go through some changes. The casting has been brilliant, in both cases.

Are relatable characters important?

The genius of *Star Wars* has always been this science fiction, fantasy context but underpinned by an emotionally recognizable human story that we all relate to by degree. We all recognize the power of these relationships, and the complications in people's lives, and it's made these films so important to pass on from generation to generation. You can call them family films, but they are iconic representations of what we know about the complications of our lives.

What do you hope audiences will take away from this film?

Recognition of our common humanity and that all of us face the same kinds of problems in our lives, and that there's hope. There's joy in the celebration of right and wrong, and in the recognition of truth that sustains us. And, they'll have fun along the way.

STAR WARS™

Disney

THIS IS THE DROID YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

Meet BB-8™ – The app-enabled Droid whose movements and personality are as authentic as they are advanced. BB-8 responds when you speak, expresses different traits, and rolls under your control or on its own. The magic this Droid creates is unlike anything you've ever experienced. It's more than a toy – it's your companion.

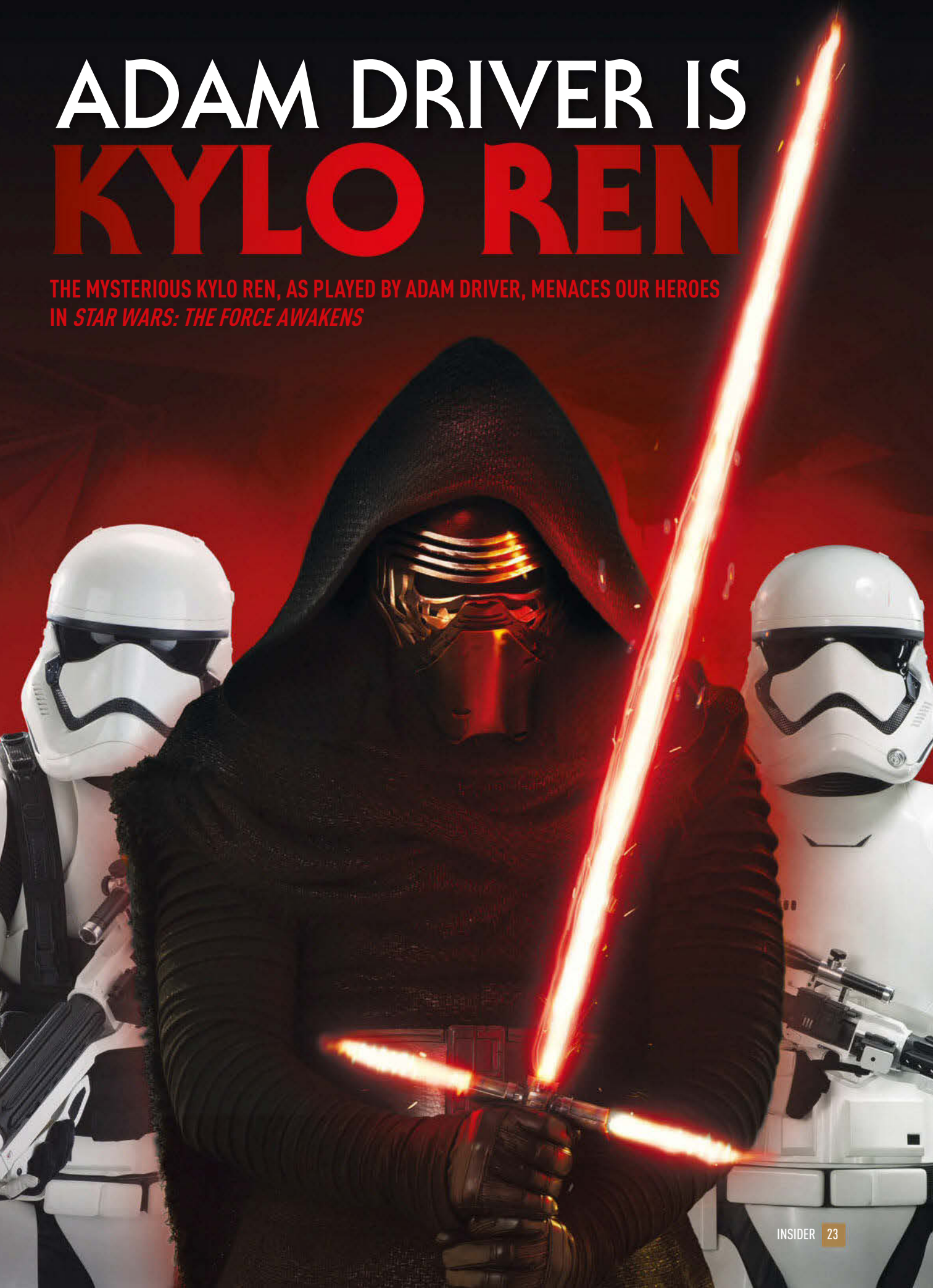
© & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.

BB-8™ APP-ENABLED DROID™

sphero.com

ADAM DRIVER IS KYLO REN

THE MYSTERIOUS KYLO REN, AS PLAYED BY ADAM DRIVER, MENACES OUR HEROES IN *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*



Clockwise, from above: Kylo Ren stalks our heroes; the imposing and mysterious Kylo Ren; taking command of the First Order troops on Jakku.

***Star Wars Insider*: How did you get involved with *The Force Awakens*?**

Adam Driver: I think it was the last day of shooting *Girls* and I got a phone call to see if I was interested in meeting J.J. Abrams to talk about *Star Wars*. I thought that it would be interesting to do, so I said "yes." A month later, I left for LA and I met J.J. to talk about the role. Then I met with Kathleen Kennedy, who talked more about it. I was very excited. It's such a big thing and I've never done anything quite like this with this many moving pieces. Wearing a mask is quite a challenging thing. It was very scary and terrifying, so it wasn't something that immediately seemed like a "yes." Actually, I thought about it quite a bit, even though it was kind of a no-brainer, but I didn't want to take it lightly.

> "THERE'S SOMETHING EMPOWERING FOR SOMEONE TO COMPLETELY HIDE THEMSELVES IN A MASK THAT IS SO INTIMIDATING."

How much was J.J. Abrams able to share with you after you signed on?

J.J. Abrams pretty much walked me through the whole thing. He talked about how he wanted to start it and the themes that he was going with. He talked about things that inspired him that he and Lawrence Kasdan were already working on. There have been small changes since then, but it's all pretty much the same. J.J. had ideas that were very clear in his mind about the conventions that he wanted to upturn and things that grounded Kylo Ren as a character. Character was something that he talked about the most. I feel like some of the movies are so heavy on special effects or visuals and lot of things get lost as far as two people talking to one another. And that was something that J.J. stressed from the beginning; It was all character—there was hardly any talk of special effects. When we originally met and talked, it was all about grounding these people in a reality, even though it's a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. If no one cares about what's happening or no one believes that these people are real, then you won't care about any of it.

What sense did you have of taking on such a role?

The idea of doing it is a scary thing. Even though J.J. mapped out what that character does, he left out a lot of things for us to discover. He wanted to get my input, which was a huge thing also in a movie of this scale. Suddenly you have a director who wants you to be involved in making it, and given the history of these movies, that's very exciting. I was a fan of the *Star Wars* movies when I was younger, so suddenly to work on it in my adult life and have input seems unbelievable.

Did you enjoy working on practical sets?

Everything is so real. I think grounding everything in a reality is more effective. Not to get on a high horse about technology, but sometimes it's in place of something that's real and tactile and I think that people take it for granted.

I've actually read the *Making of Star Wars*, and learning how all those people were doing things out of this need to do something different. The conventional way of making a movie at that time and special effects were very important, but it was all about people collaborating in a room together trying to figure out a way to make it real.

As an actor, is it freeing or limiting to wear the mask?

It's both. I get here for three or four days to shoot, and I put all this stuff on, the mask and the costume, then I put it away for a few weeks. Then I come back to it. It was such an evolving thing up until the days we started working on it. Then you're thrown into it, and boom! Then suddenly I can't see the ground. They are all good challenges. As we've been shooting, I find it more freeing. The physical life is really important. There are so many layers to him anyway. It's interesting to find out who he is with the mask on or with the mask off, and that was part of our initial conversations. There's something empowering for someone to completely hide themselves in a mask that is so intimidating.

Did you talk to J.J. Abrams and costume designer Michael Kaplan about the look of Kylo Ren at all?

Clockwise, from above: Early concept art showing Kylo Ren's helmet in detail; more concept art showing Kylo Ren in a rare, reflective mood; poised for action; Adam Driver on set, shooting the razing of Jakku.

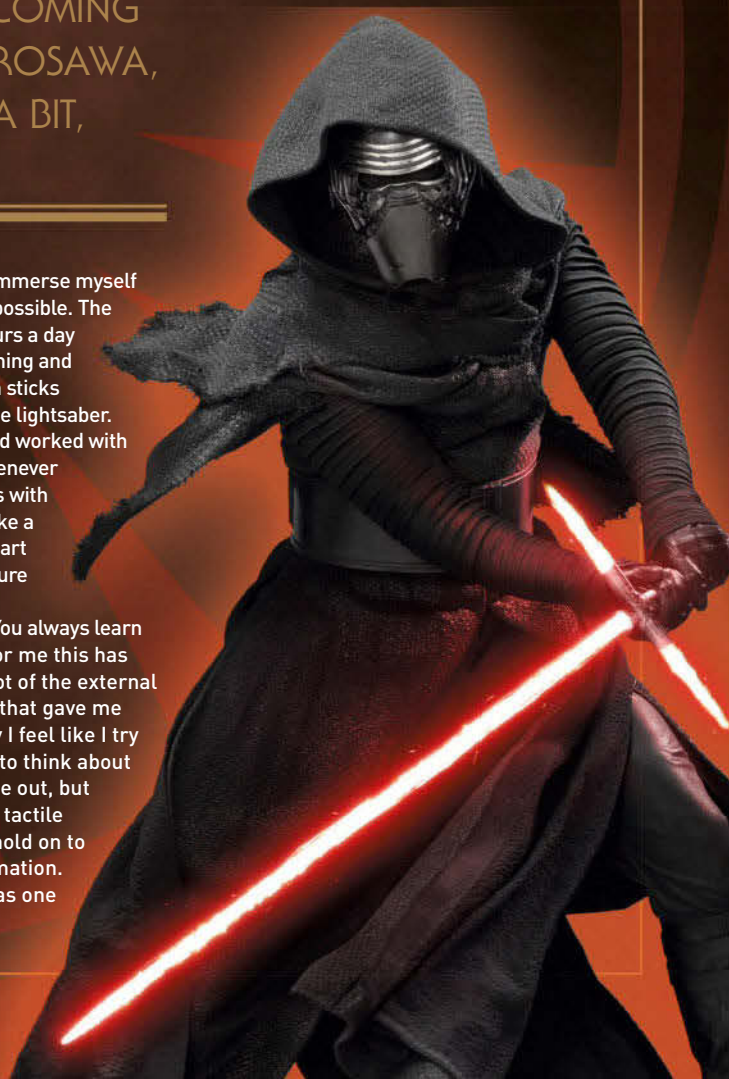
Was the table read a surreal experience?
Seeing everybody all in one room for the table read was surreal; I just wanted to sit back as an audience member and listen to them. I remember in the read-through that things would just come to life when the original characters read their parts. Suddenly I just wanted to sit back and watch and enjoy the movie, but then I realized I had lines to say and a part to play. I got to act across from people who have no idea that they are very much a part of my youth.

What makes *Star Wars* great?
At the end of it, I think the great thing about *Star Wars* is that, yes, it's a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away and there are spaceships and lightsabers, but the family story and the friendship and sacrifice elements are really big, human themes that make it enduring. All those human things are what connected people to those movies in the first place. It's never been taken lightly, and there's always been a conversation that starts with putting the humanity in it.

"I'D FLY IN TO SEE WHAT THEY WERE COMING UP WITH AND SEE NODS TO AKIRA KUROSAWA, AND HIS JACKET THAT BOWS OUT A BIT, LIKE A SAMURAI."

It was such an evolving thing. I'd fly in to see what they were coming up with and see nods to Akira Kurosawa, and his jacket that bows out just a little bit, like a samurai, and all those references. Then I'd leave for two weeks and come back to see how it was shaped a little more. My only input was whether it felt good or bad. I was involved in making it functional, which was great. They were all about how they could make it more efficient and something that someone could wear. It looks great, but if you can't move in it or breathe in it, then it doesn't make sense for the audience or the actor.

How did you go about conveying the character's physicality?
Trying to convey someone whose physical life is very much about combat and fighting in a short amount of time is a challenging thing. One of the first things I wanted to do, as soon as everything was all scheduled, was to start drilling daily and making it part of my daily life. I had three months to prepare, so I wanted to immerse myself in the training as much as possible. The first week was like four hours a day of fight training; just stretching and going over the training with sticks and slowly building up to the lightsaber. Then I went to New York and worked with people they sent there. Whenever we're not on set, I'm always with the fight guys. It's almost like a play in a way, the dancing part of fighting. There's a structure and it's important to know where everything's going. You always learn new things about it, and for me this has been a process where a lot of the external things have been formed that gave me more information. Usually I feel like I try to work internally and try to think about how it feels from the inside out, but for this there are so many tactile things that I can actually hold on to that give me a lot of information. The fight choreography was one of them.



OSCAR ISAAC IS POE DAMERON

TAKING FLIGHT AS HOTSHOT PILOT POE DAMERON IS ACTOR OSCAR ISAAC!

***Star Wars Insider*: How did you first get involved?**

Oscar Isaac: I got a call to come and meet J.J. Abrams in Paris and I showed up without any information as to exactly what it was about. I had a vague feeling that it was about *Star Wars*, but even that was a bit under wraps. So, I came to Paris and sat with him and Kathleen Kennedy and Lawrence Kasdan and they just told me about the film and the role that they were interested in me playing. I just tried to stay cool and stay calm and listen and take it in. But really my reaction was utter excitement and disbelief that this was actually happening.

Are you a *Star Wars* fan?

I've been a *Star Wars* fan as an adult and a child. It was a big part of my family. My uncle, cousin, and brother were huge *Star Wars*

"WE HAD TWO FULL-SIZED X-WINGS STANDING THERE THAT YOU CAN RUN UP TO AND THE COCKPIT WILL OPEN!"

fans and so they collected all the toys. So, I, by proxy, was also a fan. The first film I remember seeing as a child was *Return of the Jedi*. I think for a lot of people in the film business in general, *Star Wars* is a milestone. For some people, it's why they do what they do, so to be asked to be a part of it was a huge, huge honor and it just created such excitement.

How did J.J. Abrams describe his vision of the film to you?

J.J. Abrams spoke a bit about the vision of the film and also about how he wanted to approach the film by going back to the roots of it and shooting it on film, making it a very textured world. As far as the performances, it feels like he sees things on three levels. One, is visually, the story that's being told, so you can turn it on silent and still have communicated what's happening emotionally. Secondly, it's the energy, which is really the thrust of the whole thing; the proper level of energy for any given scene. Then, third, is the nuance of the characters and how they interact with each other, and what they say, and how they respond and how that reveals who the characters are. So that's been interesting to play with. So any suggestions I might have come from a place of how those three things get affected and how they can be highlighted. That was an interesting thing with playing Poe; it's a specific color that he adds to the film. It's one that's energetic. There's almost an old-school Cary Grant in *His Girl Friday* kind of speed to it, and that's something that J.J. really likes.

What did you make of the impressive scale of the film?

It's a real textured world and environment. We actually have two full-sized X-wings standing there that you can run up to and the cockpit will open! You can jump inside and fire them up. Everyone that's involved feels like it's real and like it's there. It infuses the film with something that's

unquantifiable. It's unlike anything I've ever done before.

What I like about it, too, is that it's also a bit of a period piece because it goes back to the technology that they were using in the original films. There is a slightly 1980s vibe that they're able to elicit with a lot of the designs and using actual everyday objects as well mixed into the set. That's just so great because, again, it's a reminder that it is part of a legacy and a culture. You're creating culture. That's something that Max Von Sydow had said when we were sitting there talking a little bit. He said these movies create culture; they create a whole lineage and ancestry and world with all these little bits and pieces that they use. It infuses everything with meaning.

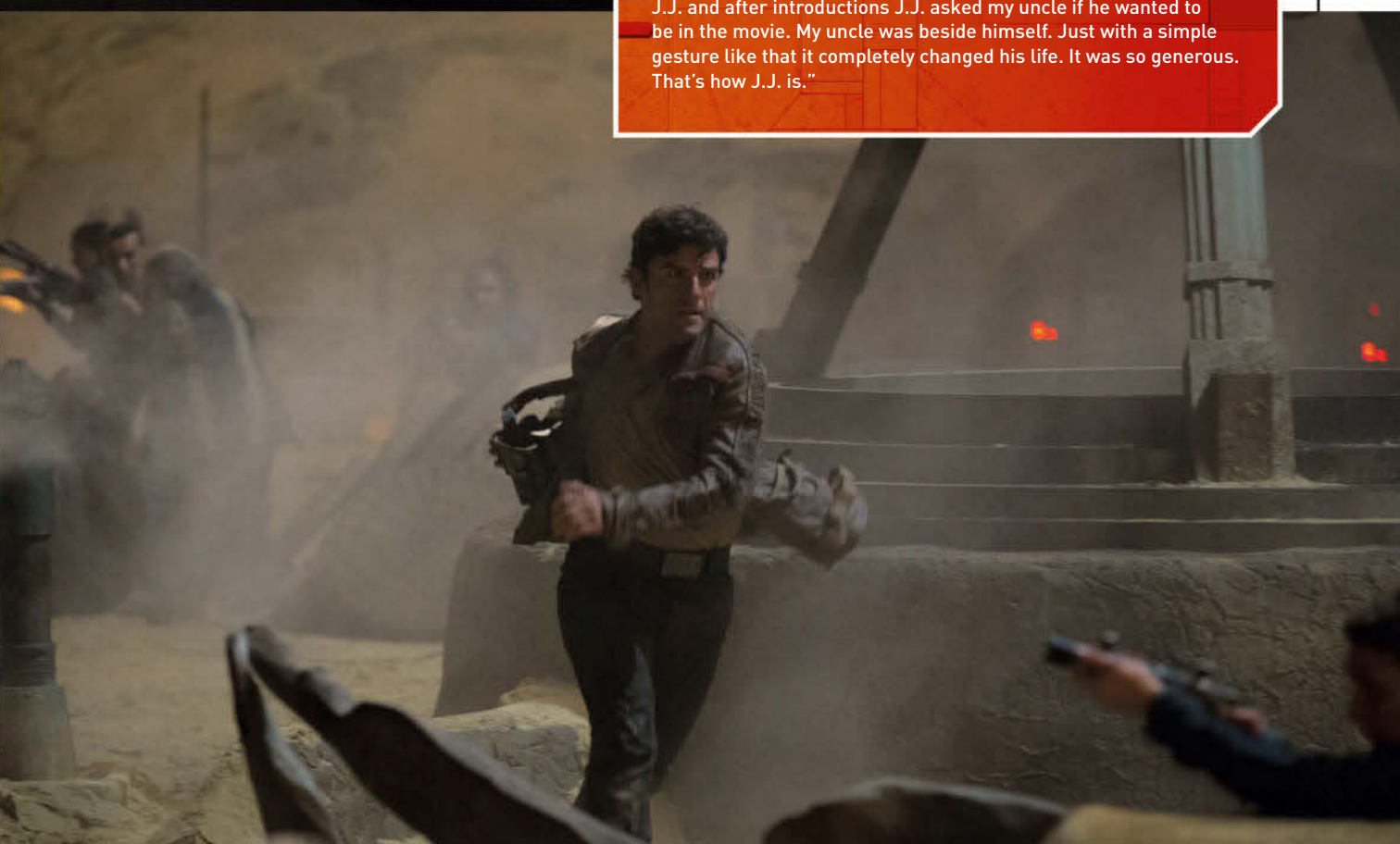
How is J.J. Abrams mixing the old and new for a new audience?

J.J. would often say that he wanted it to be messy; he didn't want it to be formal. He wanted the movie to have a bit of a subversive quality to it; a little bit of edge and grit. By infusing it with that, it makes it feel modern and really alive. I think the most

A FAMILY EXPERIENCE

OSCAR ISAAC ON A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE ON SET

"My uncle is the biggest *Star Wars* fan. He collects all the *Star Wars* toys and has them all in glass cases. Ever since we were little he had R2-D2s of all different sizes. When I told him I got cast in *Star Wars*, he was crying and could barely breathe. He came to visit me on set with all these stormtroopers. I brought him over to to meet J.J. and after introductions J.J. asked my uncle if he wanted to be in the movie. My uncle was beside himself. Just with a simple gesture like that it completely changed his life. It was so generous. That's how J.J. is."



"THIS IS YOUR WORLD AND YOU GET TO ADD TO IT."

important thing is that it be alive, and visceral.

Star Wars has a strong human element too, doesn't it?
In the original films, I think that's what was so moving about it. I remember the first film that I saw in the theater was *Return of the Jedi*. What sticks in my head is being in a theater and seeing that moment when Darth Vader takes the helmet off and Luke Skywalker sees his father as this vulnerable being. He's not this huge, black monolith; he is suddenly is this vulnerable man, and that's a big moment in a child's life when you realize your parents are not immortal gods. Those are universal themes, along with the quest for identity and the feeling that you're lost and you don't know where you fit in.

Did the experience live up to your expectations?
It has defied what I could have expected. I think that's because of J.J. Abrams, who has allowed people to feel ownership over it. You're not just being allowed to come into this world, this is *your* world and you get to add to it. You get to really live out these characters and be part of this world. That's so generous of him.

What can fans take from the film?
What's great is that this is being done with no cynicism. It's being done open-hearted and with love and enthusiasm from everybody, starting with J.J. You'll be able to feel that coming off the screen; just the love of *Star Wars* and the love of these stories and being able to add new ones to the legacy. J.J. has been doing it exactly how you would want these films to be handled. Everyone has ownership over them. Everyone wants them to be their thing. That's always a difficult and scary thing because everyone has a very specific idea of what it should be. But I think when you approach it with this much love and generosity, that stuff becomes less important. You see that this is someone who loves it so much and has found people that love it just as much and who want to make it special and beautiful.

"WE'RE GOING IN FULL THROTTLE!"

– LUKE SKYWALKER, *STAR WARS: A NEW HOPE*

SIX X-WING CORE SETS FOR OUR READERS!

Write in to the address on page 4 under the subject line "I'm a fighter ace!" by February 3 to be in with a chance of taking home a set!

Ever wanted to fly an X-wing into battle? That's the premise of the X-Wing Miniatures Game by Fantasy Flight Games, one of the most popular titles in the growing hobby games market. Players assemble squadrons of miniature starfighters and then engage in head-to-head battles for the fate of the galaxy. The streamlined rules are easy to learn, its combats are fast and exciting, and an extensive catalog of expansion packs offer a wide range of different starships and tactics.

INTO A NEW ERA

The Force Awakens Core Set allows *Star Wars* fans of all ages to launch into fast-paced dogfights between the forces of the Resistance and the First Order.

The core mechanics of X-Wing remain unchanged apart from one thing—the ships. The classic X-Wing Core Set features one rebel X-wing and two Imperial TIE fighters. In *The Force Awakens* Core Set, these have been replaced by one Resistance T-70 X-wing and two First Order TIE/fo fighters.

X-Wing has earned much acclaim for the quality of its miniature starfighters, so the game's developers ensured that the three miniature starfighters from *The Force Awakens* Core Set would exceed fans' expectations.

The developers of X-Wing know that their big challenge is to ensure that the game's two-player starfighter battles remain firmly rooted in the *Star Wars* universe. They hope their work on *The Force Awakens* Core Set offers an experiences fans will enjoy for years to come.

SWX38 TIE/fo Fighter Expansion Pack

Following the traditions of the Galactic Empire, the First Order has kept the TIE fighterdesign in service, but has updated the craft to modern combat standards. The TIE/fo Fighter Expansion Pack allows you to reinforce your X-Wing squadron with one of these modern First Order TIEs. In addition to its detailed, pre-painted TIE/fo fighter miniature, you'll find six ship cards, two new upgrades, a maneuver dial, and all the tokens you need to fly your TIE into battle! ($14.95)

www.fantasyflightgames.com

CARRIE FISHER IS PRINCESS LEIA

CARRIE FISHER'S PERFORMANCE AS PRINCESS LEIA IN THE ORIGINAL *STAR WARS* TRILOGY REDEFINED OUR IDEA OF WHAT A PRINCESS IN PERIL COULD BE LIKE. FEISTY, WITTY, TOUGH, AND VERY MUCH IN CONTROL, LEIA LED THE CHARGE, BOTH INTO BATTLE AND IN PROPELLING ICONIC FEMINIST ROLES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

***Star Wars Insider*: Did George Lucas call you to say he was thinking of doing another film?**

Carrie Fisher: We were at *Star Wars* Celebration. We were brought into a room and were seated at a long table, like we were having a meeting about the shareholders. Then, it wasn't about that.

When you met with J.J. Abrams to talk about his vision for the film, what was your take-away from that meeting?

What I felt like with J.J. Abrams is that he loved these films. It's not part of your history; it's part of your childhood. Little kids grew up watching this, and J.J. is one of those. And there's a tremendous responsibility to this thing that he treasured. He was taking that seriously. He was excited by it. There's responsibility that goes with that, and he seemed completely up for that.

Did you have any input into Leia's look?

I wanted to use the iconic hairstyle that I had initially. I wanted that hairstyle back. If nothing else, I wanted little old Leia to walk by a window wearing that hairdo on the way to the bathtub. Just show it once. But no, I guess they thought it would be too distracting.

What is your take on J.J. Abrams?

J.J. is someone who's proven he can do these epic, otherworldly films, and also worldly films. He's a writer and a director and he loves movies. That really comes across.

Was George Lucas groundbreaking in creating Leia?

Absolutely, and people keep telling me he was. I have people come up to me and say that my character inspired them to live their lives the way they did. There was a playful side that people got out of it, and there was the side of it where you think of yourself as being capable.

JOHN BOYEGA ON CARRIE FISHER

"Carrie Fisher is amazing. She's like a mother towards everyone in terms of her attitude, in terms of her grace. She's so funny. You can talk to Carrie Fisher about anything, and she'll be so clued up on the subject. She's an amazing woman to talk to. So great to hang out and work with. She throws the best parties for the cast and crew. It's great to see the changes in Princess Leia. Princess Leia always had this strength and this focus, but was also a princess. As a *Star Wars* fan, I see the princess in her eyes but it's cloaked in this shell that reads warlord, warrior, savior, and intelligence. She has this golden maturity that you couldn't play if you hadn't been through thirty-five years of real growth."

The princess is someone who takes responsibility for her life and makes choices and has a life. She doesn't fall into things. Nothing has changed, except the hair.

How was it meeting the new cast?
I was nervous and excited. We had a good time together. Everyone was nervous in different ways. Watching Daisy Ridley, she has grown enormously during filming. She's very confident. So, it's definitely a home to her. John (Boyega) always seemed comfortable. John came into the situation very confident.

How is Adam Driver doing as a villain?
Playing a villain, you don't know you're a villain. This is your cause, and this is what Adam is doing. He's passionate, but he's also solitary.

> "I AM PRINCESS LEIA. PRINCESS LEIA IS ME."

Is it fun to see the return some of the original creatures?
It's good to have them back. It's a *Star Wars* high school reunion.

How about having Anthony Daniels back as C-3PO?
That's awesome and he looks exactly the same!

Does it feel like a world you all know, but moved on?
We've moved on. So you have more experience to bring to what you're looking at; to bring to bear upon the situation. You were an innocent; you were moving faster when you were a kid, when you were making these films. So, now we're looking at it with a lot more experience.

Do you think there is a part of Leia in you?
I am Princess Leia. Princess Leia is me. It's like a Mobius strip. My life has informed who she is, and she's informed who I am and who I've had to be, based on experiences I've gone through and the courage that was required to go through some of that. So, a lot of her demeanor, her passion and her willingness to go on, I've found in me.

What do you think of the fans?
This is their fairytale. This is what they grew up with, what their fantasies were propelled by. It was this other world. They belong to that other world and they feel a part of that. They feel like they know you and to an extent they do. The funniest thing to me, and the sweetest thing to me, is when they bring you a three-week-old child wearing the Leia outfit. It's also seeing these tiny kids and the children know who you are. That's the oddest, sweetest, most fascinating aspect of it. I think the fans will be happy to be in their home away from home again.

SIMON PEGG ON CARRIE FISHER

"I once lined up at Comic-Con International: San Diego in 2004 when I was there to promote *Shaun of the Dead*. I finished a signing on the floor and stood up, walked out of my booth and joined the line to meet Carrie Fisher. I waited for an hour or so and then finally got to her and told her that I had a picture of her by my bedside on the wall that I would kiss every night before I went to sleep. She was my first crush. She said to me, "Do you feel better for telling me that?" And I said, "Yes, thank you very much," and I walked off with her autograph. Years later, I was on set and Carrie and I were having a conversation. We were walking around set, chatting together and I said, "I lined up to meet you once." And then a couple weeks ago, I asked her to marry me, which was really nice. But she checked my finger. I should have taken the ring off. Next time"

OSCAR ISAAC ON CARRIE FISHER

"They're great. That's when it really feels surreal; when you see Carrie, and Harrison Ford, C-3PO and R2-D2 and Chewbacca. These are icons in the flesh. That's when you get a little bit of chills like, *wow, this is actually happening!* They've been great, particularly Carrie, who's so funny. I find her to be very kind and it's been a lot of fun to shoot with her. When you get Carrie going, she still remembers all the lines from the old films, so she'll just launch into the opening of the first *Star Wars* where she's leaving the message in R2-D2. It's pretty incredible. It's all still right there."

PEDIATRICIAN PREFERRED[1]

THE FORCE IS STRONG.

VITAMINS KIDS LOVE!

STAR WARS THE FORCE AWAKENS

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

**52 Week Nielsen ScanTrack Data ending 6/27/2015. Leading brand's Complete Multivitamin gummies contain 3 grams of sugar per 2 gummies.

[1]Based on survey of pediatricians who discuss children's supplements with their patients' parents and prefer to recommend Star Wars Complete formula vs. comparable leading brands. All are Pediatrician Preferred except Immune Support Complex.

© & ™ Lucasfilm, Ltd. All rights reserved.
Manufactured by NatureSmart, LLC.

Disney

LUCASFILM Ltd.

ANTHONY DANIELS AS C-3PO

FORTY YEARS ON, THE LONGEST SERVING *STAR WARS* CAST-MEMBER ANTHONY DANIELS IS STILL DELIGHTING AUDIENCES AS C-3PO!

***Star Wars Insider*: Tell us about your history as C-3PO.**

Anthony Daniels: It's odd for me to realize that 40 years of my life have been spent playing C-3PO. He's changed over the various generations of films because I have been in all seven movies now. I'm the only person to be involved in all of those movies, which is really strange. One of the reasons that it is possible is because C-3PO isn't human. He's very human inside: he gets old inside and he gets more tired and cranky inside, but on the outside he's just who you first met back in 1977. For a lot of people, that's a very strong connection. It's helped me be a part of this extraordinary saga.

From the concept art, they created a face that has spoken to millions of people around the world. It has connected with them and given them memories for three generations now. When I look at him, I still have that feeling. C-3PO's face gives the impression that he's thinking and that he cares; that he's afraid. He's always afraid. But for people who don't know C-3PO, his principal role is protocol and etiquette. Now, if there are two things that never exist in the *Star Wars* galaxy, it's protocol and etiquette. He was programmed to make people feel comfortable and for them to make other people feel

"IF THERE ARE TWO THINGS THAT NEVER EXIST IN THE *STAR WARS* GALAXY, IT'S PROTOCOL AND ETIQUETTE."

comfortable. So for the most part, he's horrified by what he sees going on around him. He abhors space travel; he hates battles and he hates drama. He just wants to be serving the canapés and the cocktails. I think why people relate to C-3PO is because they recognize themselves in him. He can be overt about something he doesn't like and he can say he wants to go home.

How was it to be reunited with the other classic cast-members?
This is the first time that we have been back in a place that we, funnily enough, belong to. This is our world. All our destinies have changed, and our destinies bring us to where we are today. This is the world we belong in.

I was thinking the other day, that way back in 1977, I'd take Mark, Carrie and Harrison to the local Indian restaurant in London. The other night, there we were bowling, in a bowling alley, with Carrie. Tonight, I'm off with Mark and his family to a fish and chip shop in London! That's the normalcy: you can do wacky stuff in the day, then you do fish and chips. Being in scenes with these characters just feels right. Doing a scene with Carrie the other day, particularly when we're in rehearsal, I can just look straight into her eyes, her beautiful eyes, and she can look straight back to my bloodshot ones, and we have total understanding of what we're talking about. It must be difficult for her and the others, that when I put the face on they're looking at this gold mask. They have to look straight into that and hopefully remember the emotion that they'd seen on my face. If C-3PO is worried, I'm worried. I've

said that one of the reasons C-3PO works is the reflected reality of the other actors. If they walk on and working with a gold man doesn't make sense to them, the audience wouldn't believe. But their belief passes through their faces to you as a member of the audience. So, to see Carrie looking with great sincerity, and talking with great sincerity to C-3PO is a joy. I think she's very fond of him too. They've been together a long time.

How did you find out that they were making another film?
I first found out that Disney had bought Lucasfilm and as time went on, we all learned that J.J. Abrams was recreating the old world. It was a complete surprise, but when I found out there will be three films and it will complete George's initial idea of three trilogies, it made sense.

Do you have the same costume?
C-3PO is pretty much back to how you would remember him. There are tiny nuances that are different. Some of them are technical on the inside, and that's for me to know. But there are other little editions, and fans will enjoy that.

In *A New Hope*, C-3PO's left leg was silver, and nobody ever noticed because it was light silver, which would merely reflect the gold or the desert or the sand. George Lucas' original idea was that C-3PO had a history. The idea that *Star Wars* didn't just happen out of nowhere; it wasn't page one of a story. It was page a million of an age-old story of good and evil. One of George's concepts is that characters should be broken down, used, scratched. This makes you think, something has happened in the past. He has a history. Move forward and J.J. Abrams takes that idea several notches higher. C-3PO—I don't know how he feels about it, but I don't think he's happy about it because he is a purist—has a red arm. His left arm is a fairly brutal, red, rusty, sanguine thing. Something has happened to him in the last 30 years. The rebels have had all sorts of dramas, and one of his was clearly losing a limb. In Episode VIII or by Episode IX, it would be nice to be back in one piece!

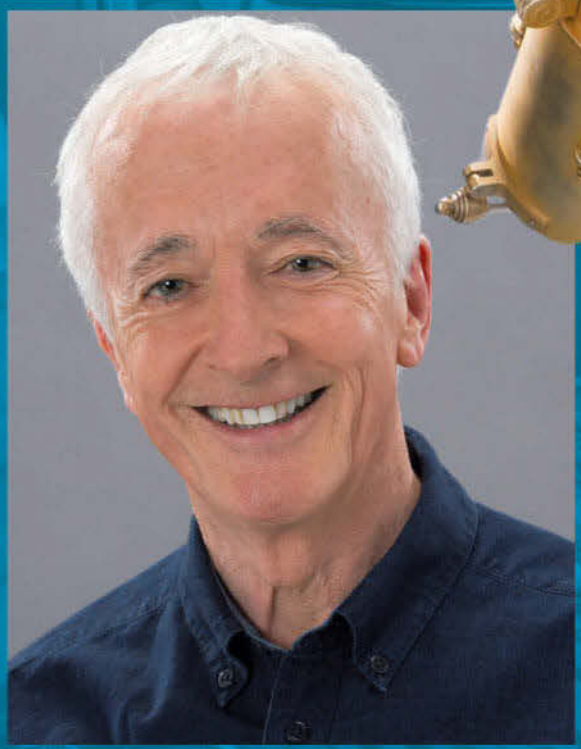
The relationship with R2-D2 is still the same, isn't it?
When I began working with R2-D2, I had to improvise a relationship with a silent box. You could almost do this as a drama school exercise to make the audience believe that this box has a personality. I think I achieved it, and Ben Burtt's sounds made such a difference. Suddenly I was seeing a two-way conversation and it was magical.

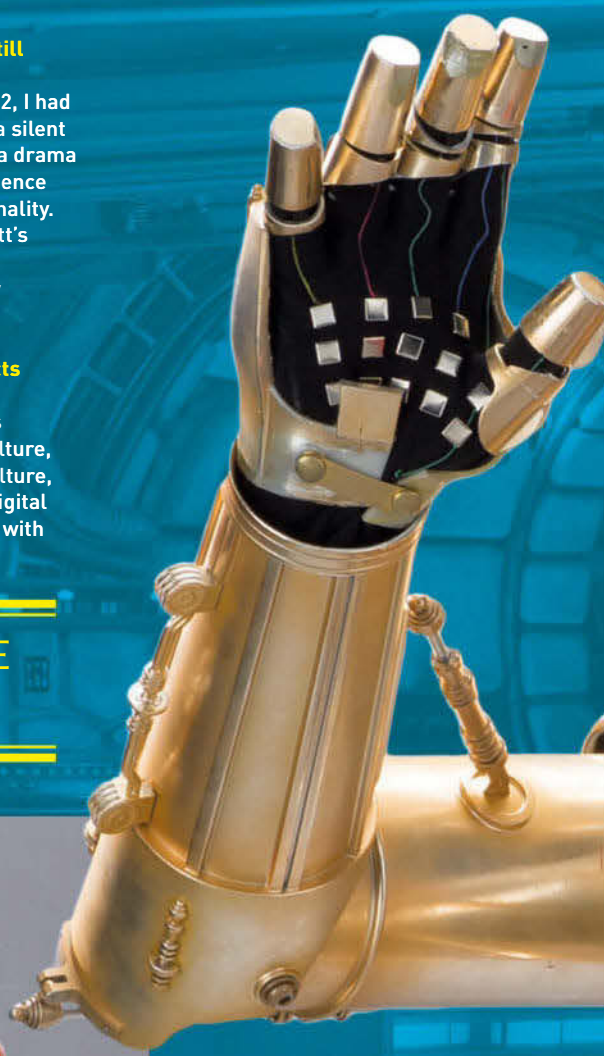
How was working with real effects and real creatures?
One of the reasons *Star Wars* has maintained its role in popular culture, and grown actually in popular culture, is because of the growth of the digital age. The *Star Wars* saga grew up with the technical age. George Lucas was one of the top people in that search for technology and its uses.

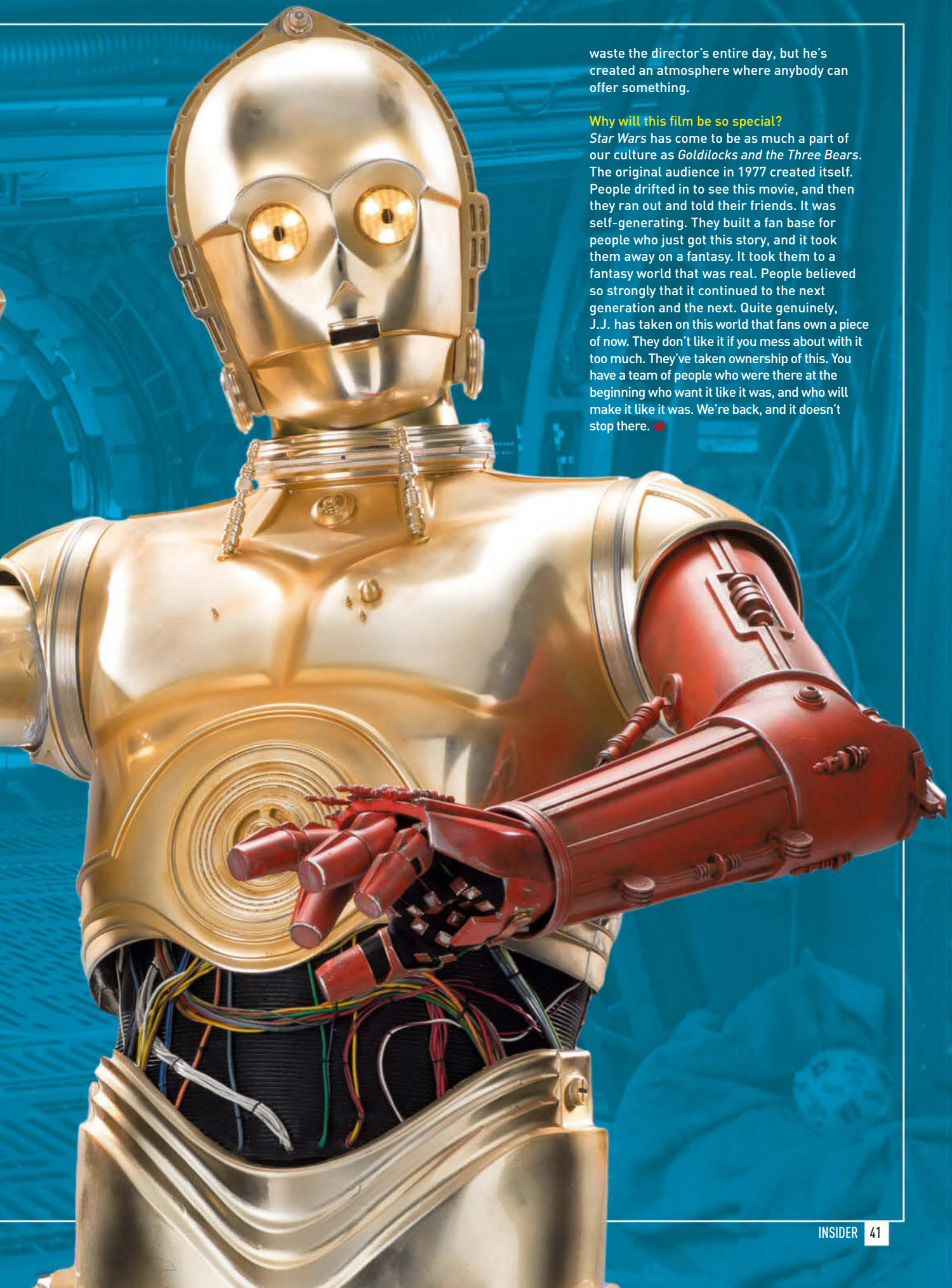
J.J. has done something extraordinary. He's absorbed the original technology and the new technology and has the ability to weave the two together to keep a retro look. There are real sets where it needs to be real. There are characters that are being operated by somebody and then there are those actors in full costume, keeping it real and organic on the set.

Has there been much collaboration on this film?
I think on any film set, but particularly on this one, there is an extraordinary feeling of collaboration. You have so many different departments, whether its props, makeup, costume, wardrobe, green, set dressers, electricians, lighting, camera, sound or acting. J.J. has created the most collaborative experience. I think everybody feels the ability to walk up and say, can we try that? Obviously you can't

"IN EPISODE VIII OR IX IT WOULD BE NICE TO BE BACK IN ONE PIECE!"







waste the director's entire day, but he's created an atmosphere where anybody can offer something.

Why will this film be so special?

Star Wars has come to be as much a part of our culture as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. The original audience in 1977 created itself. People drifted in to see this movie, and then they ran out and told their friends. It was self-generating. They built a fan base for people who just got this story, and it took them away on a fantasy. It took them to a fantasy world that was real. People believed so strongly that it continued to the next generation and the next. Quite genuinely, J.J. has taken on this world that fans own a piece of now. They don't like it if you mess about with it too much. They've taken ownership of this. You have a team of people who were there at the beginning who want it like it was, and who will make it like it was. We're back, and it doesn't stop there.

JOHN BOYEGA IS FINN

FINN, THE FIRST NEW CHARACTER WE SAW IN THE TEASER TRAILER BACK IN THE FALL OF 2014, IS PLAYED BY THE CHARISMATIC ACTOR, JOHN BOYEGA

Opposite page: John Boyega prepares for battle as Finn. **Left:** On the run on Jakku!

***Star Wars Insider*: Tell us about the audition process?**

John Boyega: I got a call about the auditions for *Star Wars* and my agent told me that J.J. Abrams wanted to meet with me and put me on tape for the role. I didn't know what part I was going up for and I hadn't read the script, so I took a train into Central London, met J.J., spoke about the role, and then did the scenes. It was two scenes; I practiced it a few times, and then we put it on tape. It was quite the experience because it was nerve-wracking knowing that it was *Star Wars*, but not knowing the specifics of the part. After that it was recall after recall, then a screen test with Chewbacca came, which was exciting. Then, I got the call to say that I had got the part, and that was after seven months of extreme auditioning!

From the get-go, they specified that it was a male leading role. *Star Wars* is an ensemble cast, so we have lots of leads that create the narrative, and I didn't know that he was so central to the story. I only found that out halfway through the audition process when J.J. said, "You're the guy. You know that, right?" I was like, "Ahh! Okay, it's time to get the acting chops together and do something!"

Do you remember the moment when you were told that you got the part?

Prior to getting the part, I had been at a premiere for another film I had done, and my mind was definitely more fixated on whether I'd receive the part or not. I remember being on the red carpet and it had leaked that I was up for the *Star Wars* part.

So, there were various media outlets asking if I was up for *Star Wars*. I said, "I haven't heard anything, but if J.J. Abrams wants me to be in *Star Wars*, that would be amazing." The next day, I got an email from J.J. asking where I was. I told him I was at home and he asked if I could get to a little café in Mayfair, London. I hopped in a cab, drove down, and saw J.J. in the café by himself, drinking a cup of tea. We had a brief conversation and he asked me whether I was ready. He asked me if would be interested in working out and training, both as an actor and physically. He asked me if I realized how big the responsibility would be. I said, "Yeah, I'll be fine. I'll do anything." Then, he told me I was the new star in *Star Wars*. Everything stopped. I noticed everything. I noticed how many sugar cubes were in this little cup on the table. All the time it was going through my head, he just said I'm the new star in *Star Wars*. I was willing myself to breathe. Then J.J. raised a cup of water and said, "Congratulations." I was ecstatic. It was probably the happiest day of my life. I walked all around London just in dreamland. This felt different. I've received calls for roles that I fought for before, but this not only felt like a triumph for me as an actor, but a day that felt like I was a part of history and that just made me really, really happy.

How long was it before the table read that you knew you got the role?

I was told I had the role about one week before the read-through. We were told to keep quiet; we couldn't tell any family or friends. No one knew about it. Obviously, there was no press release and it was really hard just going through normal life without saying that I was cast in *Star Wars*! But I was really excited that the picture came out with all of

us at the read-through. It was really historical. It was amazing. I didn't even tell my parents! They found out the day of the read-through because I was told specifically to keep it quiet.

Were you a *Star Wars* fan?
I was born in 1992, so I grew up on the prequels, and then my dad told me that I should go back and watch the originals, also, because that rounds up the whole Anakin and Luke Skywalker story. So I did go back and watch the originals and thought they were amazing. Every actor captured our imaginations and it was definitely an artistic influence for actors, directors, and everybody in the entertainment field, from visual effects to everybody that makes the magic happen. *Star Wars* has definitely been a part of my sci-fi nerd, geek side. I'm a big comic-book reader and it's part of that universe.

Who were your favorite characters?
Han Solo and Chewbacca. I'm a big R2-D2 fan, too. Now we've got our new droid, BB-8, who's probably like the young, upcoming R2-D2. But the whole universe is just amazing to me. The whole narrative and the character arcs really just fit together. George Lucas did a good job.

Do you have a favorite *Star Wars* film?
Return of the Jedi is my favorite film, because you find Luke Skywalker at a very vulnerable time. In the first film he was learning who he is and learning about this special world that's out there that he never knew about. *Return of the Jedi* is a great mix of drama, comedy, and somewhat expands the universe in terms of the Ewoks and other creatures that you find in the movie. It's my favorite because it's the establishment of each character at a different point in their lives. You see the whole story from a different point of view. I always saw the first two films as from the point of view of R2-D2 and C-3PO. I only cared about these droids. These droids are just being exchanged, and passed around, and the story is told from their viewpoint. But, *Return of the Jedi* is fixated on Luke Skywalker's story and he's becoming the top Jedi on the streets right now and that was really cool to me.

> "I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SWING A LIGHTSABER."

How did you feel on your first day of shooting in Abu Dhabi?
Abu Dhabi, in the heat, was quite the experience. Going out there and being in this environment—huge desert, loads of props, a big set, and obviously J.J. Abrams with his enthusiasm and his energy coming in was just amazing. Just looking around and taking it all in and saying, "I am here. We are about to film this movie." I knew it was going to be an experience I would never forget.

What was it like shooting in Abu Dhabi?
Abu Dhabi is a beautiful place. We were there to shoot the first part of the movie. I'm in this nice hotel and I get in my car and as we're driving, I'm looking all around at the structure of Abu Dhabi. It looks amazing. We ended up in the desert where the TIE fighter scene was being shot.

When I walked on to the set, I saw this huge, life-size TIE Fighter, black and red, crushed in the sand. Balls of fire everywhere. Debris. TIE fighter skid marks going 200 yards. And, of course, Finn has to be in a stormtrooper outfit. I had to

OSCAR ISAAC ON JOHN BOYEGA

"John is a fantastic human being. I really, really have a lot of affection for him. He reminds me a lot of my little brother, actually. He's incredibly flexible and on his toes, with different ideas. He's got a huge responsibility and I think that he's just doing it with a lot of grace and generosity. He's going to be great."

wear it in this heat for the next couple of days. Let's just say I relied on a combination of sweat, passion, fandom, ice cubes, eye drops, and a lot of water. I was drenched in sweat by the time I got out of the stormtrooper outfit. But, most days, it got easier based on passion and fandom alone. I was trying to be professional but every time J.J. Abrams would come up to me with a note, I'd be like, "It's a TIE fighter!" I was literally star-struck seeing the TIE fighter next to me. It made the scenes easier, though it was very hot.

When did you meet Daisy Ridley and how did you two get along?

Daisy Ridley and I met during the audition process, and it was important for us to know each other so that we could have good chemistry on screen. Ever since then we've just bonded and we had a great time. It's funny because we're both going through this same experience of being in a picture that's huge, and being on something of this scale is new to both of us. We're kind of holding each other's hand through this experience, and we've been having fun! Cracking jokes and singing nice sing-along songs every morning, which everyone else doesn't like, but we do our thing!

Daisy and I get along on screen and off screen, so what you will see in the movie, in terms of our rhythm, in terms of our banter, is real off-screen. When J.J. was going through the script with us, he made some tweaks based on our relationship and the rhythm of the way we talk to each other. It's great that's been implemented in the movie, because people will feel that these two strangers, who've come from two different worlds, but are somewhat the same, are bonding and that there's a real friendship between them. When you believe in characters that have great chemistry, you buy into the reality of it. You care about the characters. So, it's been wonderful working with Daisy, and having this real chemistry on screen.

We hear you made rap songs?

The official Daisy Ridley and John Boyega *Star Wars* album was based on some time off in the desert. We're not always in front of the camera, so we had a lot of time hanging out. We decided to make raps about our experience. Just think of it as poetry.

How was working with J.J. Abrams?

J.J. Abrams is an actor's director. He understands the balance between the technical and the artistic. He'll get the best out of his

Clockwise, from opposite page: Sharing a drink with with a happabore as J.J. Abrams directs; feeling the heat on location in Abu Dhabi; a fateful meeting; feeling the heat on the barren world of Jakku.

DAISY RIDLEY ON JOHN BOYEGA

"John's like an annoying little brother. He's always telling me to shut up because I sing all the time! It's so great how well we get on. In Abu Dhabi we didn't have a chance to really meet, and that relationship wasn't there at first. But since we started filming in London, and building that relationship in the scenes, it's easy. It's not hard to find it with someone you get on with. It's a chemistry thing. As it went on, we're just like brother and sister. We get on really well. We're both incredibly silly. With the adults on set you can feel they're thinking, Oh we've got two children here!"

crew and his cast. Until we reach a balance, he won't be satisfied. That's what I love about J.J. Also, J.J. is a *Star Wars* fan. He's clued up about *Star Wars* and very energetic on the set. He's a very vibrant young man! From an actor's perspective, he gives you the best notes in terms of a scene and helps you get the best out of your character. It's been fun working with him. They couldn't give this opportunity to a better guy, and what I've seen so far looks really good. J.J. Abrams—he's got this!

How did J.J. Abrams influence Finn?

J.J.'s influence is definitely evident when you read the script. Especially with Finn, because Finn is charismatic like J.J.; fun, very funny, and very real. That's a part of J.J. that he's put in Finn. But also it connects to the original *Star Wars*, where there was danger, but it wasn't like, drama-danger, it's *Star Wars* danger; it's exciting and thrilling.

Is J.J. Abrams celebrating old school filmmaking with this new film?

J.J. is definitely accepting the new with the CGI, but, also, at the same time he is paying homage to the old with physical effects, and it has been amazing because every time I get in that car to come to Pinewood Studios to film *Star Wars*, I always think to myself, *What am I going to see with my very eyes today*? And there always is something.

> "J.J. ABRAMS IS VERY ENERGETIC ON SET. HE'S A VIBRANT YOUNG MAN!"

As a fan who loves all sides of technology and practical effects, how do you think J.J. Abrams has done?

J.J. has managed to keep the balance between what we're used to from the old *Star Wars* films—physical effects, real, loveable, relatable characters, a great story arc—and what we're used to now, such as CGI and motion capture, and he's managed to make this really good balance within the movie. He'll do everything he can do physically before then expanding his ideas to what we can do on the computer. J.J. has done a very good job with making sure that the fans get to keep what made them love the *Star Wars* films, but, also, opening up the world to a new generation. It's a good collaboration, and that's what you need for a space opera.

You've trained hard for the film. What was your regime?

For a role like this, and for a film like *Star Wars*, there's a lot of action and J.J. is great at doing action both in space and on the ground. As actors, we needed to learn some hand-to-hand combat and how to use the lightsabers, so I was involved in over seven months of training. There was actually a lot of John Williams *Star Wars* music coming from the speakers in the gym. I would do some intervals and run and do some cardio, skipping, boxing, weight training, all that kind of stuff. When we started filming, I felt like I was really ready.

Was the combat training pretty serious stuff?
It was. Our lightsabers are really heavy, so you do get a sense of this power and this power that's coming out of this weapon and it does really do something to you, but you do have to be strong and you have to have skill. But it's been fun doing the stunt training because I've always wanted to swing a lightsaber. We were actually working with wooden sticks for a long time to keep safe and get used to the movement and to learn the choreography.

Did you enjoy working with Oscar Isaac?
I love Oscar Isaac. He's a very articulate man and has a great sense of art. He takes this very seriously, and, also, at the same with a character like Poe Dameron, he's very charming, handsome and fun. I'm younger than him and he's done so much more, so it's great to learn from him.

What was Pinewood Studios like?
It's amazing. When you come on set, it takes your breath away. The sets match what they were back in the first three original *Star Wars* movies. It's easier to act when everything is physical, everything is around you, and you can play with some things. It's the *Star Wars* magic and that's something George Lucas started and we're definitely carrying on with that.

Is it fun to be surrounded by all the strange creatures?
I'm definitely having fun surrounded by the creatures. I am a big creature-feature fan, and I love physical effects. I love the creatures being right there in my face. We have a great team that does the puppetry on these creatures. It's hilarious, because when the camera's not rolling they still stay in it, so the animatronics are still going, the puppetry's still going, so you find yourself having conversations with several different species you've never met before!

Do people recognize you more, now?
I'm definitely taking in the privacy and the fun of just being able to go to the store and buy a few groceries and have no one bother me. I'm taking that in now because London is a special city to me; it's where I grew up, and I love going to Central London. I love walking the London streets and, for me, I'm just doing all of that now, and I've accepted that it's going to change. I'm fine with that, because it is something special that we're doing here, and we're working with good people who are here to help us and to talk to us about the exposure and the amazing things that are going to happen when the film is released.

How does the huge expectation for this film make you feel?
I feel a sense of responsibility, because *Star Wars* is bigger than just the movies, although the movies are the core of *Star Wars*, but there are the videogames, books, and comic books. People are relating to these characters in different ways and, for me, I do feel a sense of responsibility for whatever character I am creating. I want to make sure that *Star Wars* fans are happy after they leave the cinema and that they have a lot to talk about.

Clockwise, from opposite, top: Boyega joins Daisy Ridley on the *Millennium Falcon* set; Finn in trouble; working with J.J. Abrams on a key sequence; Finn and Rey make a bolt for freedom!

"FINN IS FREAKED OUT BY DROIDS AND ALIENS!"

What are you most looking forward to when the film comes out?
When the film comes out in December I am looking forward to sitting down at the IMAX in Waterloo, London, because that's where I always used to go growing up, and watching it with my family and friends, and just enjoying *Star Wars* as a fan, nothing more. I know the story, I know about the characters, but I feel like I'm blessed to a certain extent that I can watch a film I'm in and just accept it as an independent thing. I almost let it go and it's the audience's now, it's the fans' now, and I want to partake in that. I want to be a *Star Wars* fan, I want to go there with a Chewbacca T-shirt, have my R2-D2 mug with some soda in there, and have a great time and watch *Star Wars* like any other fan!

What do the new generation of characters add to the film?
There's something amazing about the new generation characters in *Star Wars*. They are obviously younger, and less experienced, and they don't know about themselves as much as the other characters do. They don't have an established view of the galaxy, and they are learning.

Finn is definitely the physical representation of the young generation when it comes to the *Star Wars* universe. *Star Wars* has a huge following, but there is a small percentage of young people who haven't been introduced to the *Star Wars* universe, or who are more into the Legends stories, but don't know how to relate to the movies. Finn is their direct link. He doesn't know what's going on and is freaked out by droids and aliens. I think the audience will enjoy a relatable character and his experiences.

Was your American accent hard to master?
Doing an American accent is quite interesting. I remember auditioning and there were talks about whether Finn was going to be doing an American accent, or a British accent. I was very happy that they chose an American accent because one of my favorite characters, obviously, is Han Solo, and Han Solo has this very boyish, charismatic American accent and it makes him sound like he's king of the world. The accent does help me channel that energy a bit. It's great for Finn, and it does help with making him funny and relatable.

What will it be like when you see your action figure?
Seeing my own action figure will be super-exciting. I don't know how I'll react!

Clockwise, from top, left: Finn and Rey make their escape; lost amongst the dunes of Jakku; a "super-exciting" Finn action figure!

topps

STAR WARS

GALACTIC CONNEXIONS

COLLECTIBLE TRADING DISCS AND GAME

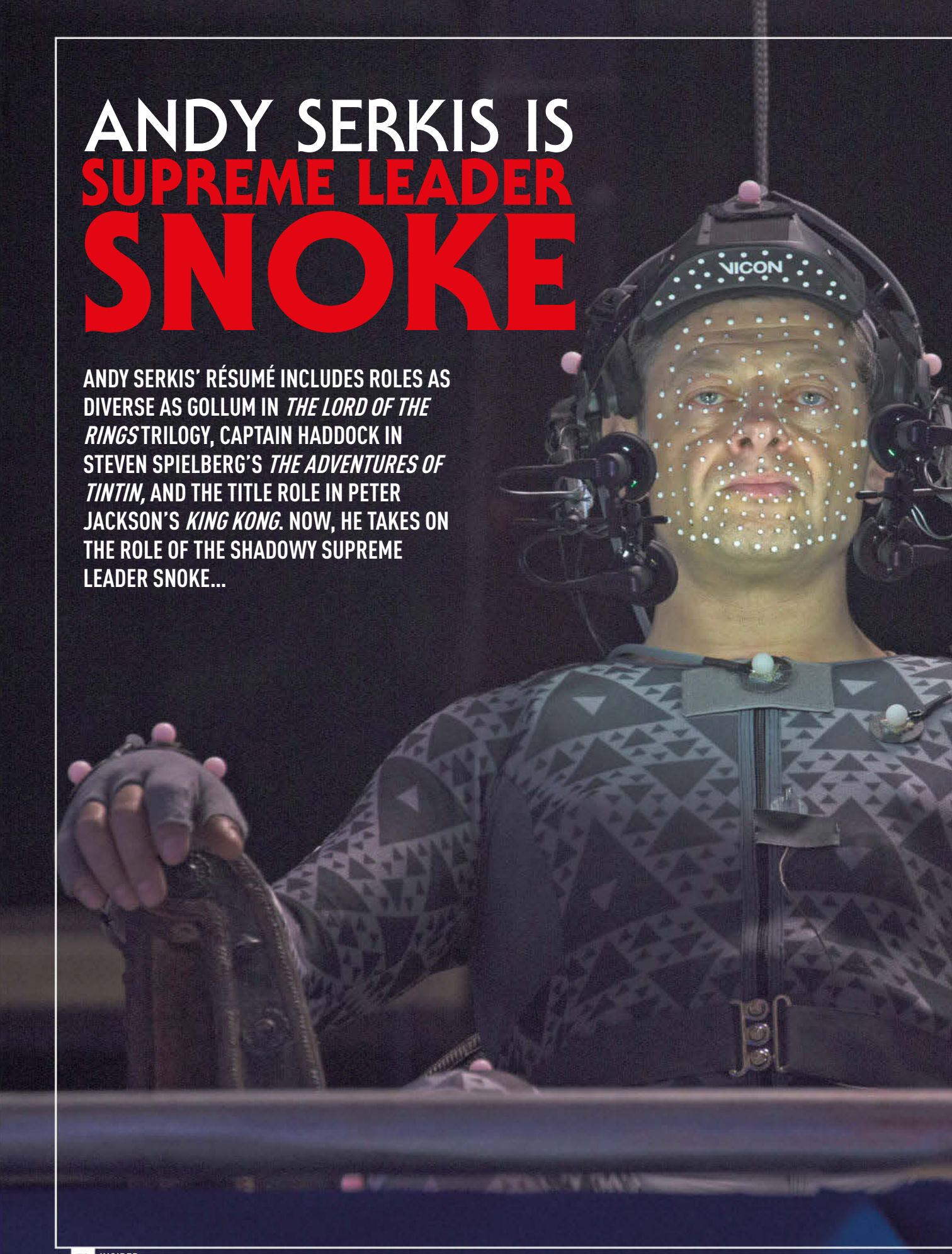
Only at Walmart

75 CHARACTERS!
HUNDREDS OF VARIATIONS TO COLLECT!
LOOK FOR SPECIAL RARE AND ULTRA-RARE DISCS!

topps STAR WARS © & ™ Lucasfilm, Ltd. Topps is a registered trademark of the Topps Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Topps does not, in any manner, make any representations as to whether its products will attain any future value. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. For a chance to get an insert, see pack for details.

ANDY SERKIS IS SUPREME LEADER SNOKE

ANDY SERKIS' RÉSUMÉ INCLUDES ROLES AS DIVERSE AS GOLLUM IN *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* TRILOGY, CAPTAIN HADDOCK IN STEVEN SPIELBERG'S *THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN,* AND THE TITLE ROLE IN PETER JACKSON'S *KING KONG*. NOW, HE TAKES ON THE ROLE OF THE SHADOWY SUPREME LEADER SNOKE...



***Star Wars Insider*: How did you get involved in *The Force Awakens*?**

Andy Serkis: It's an interesting story, really. I knew the film was being made and was excited by the idea of it. At the time I was working on *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* with [director] Matt Reeves, who knows J.J. Abrams. It so happened that J.J. was visiting Matt while he was doing a cut of *Dawn*. This was before any visual effects had been put in; before the ape actors had been replaced with visual effects. J.J. saw a cut with just the actors in it and was quite taken with it. He decided we should meet, so we met up at a hotel. It was fantastic; very much like we were jiving off each other. We really hit it off. It was clear we'd work together. I didn't know exactly what I'd be playing, but he asked if I would like to be involved. I told him I would love to be involved in *Star Wars*.

Can you talk us through what performance capture is?

Performance capture is the art and craft of an actor embodying a role that will be manifested on screen as a computer generated character. But the authorship of the role, all the acting, takes place with other actors. Instead of putting on a costume and makeup beforehand,

you're playing the role without the help of those things, but neither the hindrance. All of the facial expressions, all your acting decisions, and the authorship of the role happen on set with the other actors. A clever team of animators and CG artists then have the job of transposing that performance onto a digital avatar without losing the nuance and subtlety and underlying performance of what the actor has given. That's how motion capture works. What's amazing is that it enables anyone to play anything. Philosophically, it's the greatest acting tool of the 21st Century. It doesn't matter what size you are. Stereotyping, or typecasting, is dead. It doesn't matter what the color of your skin or your height or your sex is. It's a brilliantly liberating tool that actors are finally seeing, and the more it's used as a standard industry tool, it's really proliferated.

> "PEOPLE ARE FASCINATED WITH *STAR WARS*. IT'S AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL, POTENT UNIVERSE."

Do you feel the pressure for a film like this?

I came off a huge press tour for *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, and every single question was about *Star Wars*. People are fascinated with *Star Wars*. It's an incredibly potent, powerful universe. There's such a hunger for the stories. It's great archetypal storytelling. J.J.'s really gotten back to the essence of what this story is about; the real humanness of the story. People are excited to see that. They know from what he's done before, that he has such amazing heart and understanding of character and emotional truth in all the films he's made. He's the perfect guide and director for this. His desire is to tap into shooting on film, on anamorphic lenses, using puppetry and old-school methodologies to bring the story back into the public consciousness. He's done such an amazing job; it looks amazing. I think the fans will flip their minds!

PETER MAYHEW IS CHEWBACCA

PETER MAYHEW'S TOWERING PERFORMANCE AS CHEWBACCA IS ONE OF THE GREAT ICONS OF THE *STAR WARS* SAGA. NOW THE LEGENDARY WOOKIEE IS ROARING BACK INTO ACTION IN *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*!

***Star Wars Insider*: How did your *Star Wars* journey begin?**
Peter Mayhew: I started acting back in 1977. I had done a movie called *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger*. I played the Minotaur. That was a wonderful opportunity. About six months later, I got a phone call that they were looking for a tall person for another movie. That led to an interview with George Lucas. George's office was enormous. I sat down on the sofa and when George walked in, I stood up. The interview was just about over at that point. George said that Chewie would do mime action. He can negotiate, but he doesn't make human noises. So, you have to watch what other people are saying and, consequently, you join it up with body action and this sort of thing. Then we went down to the creature shop and got a face mask done. The next day we went to a costume shop in London and got the suit made. Everything started to happen from that point on. It was a remarkable time in my life.

How much was scripted for you and how much was you?
I'd say about 50/50. For example, in the *Millennium Falcon* cockpit, you've got four people in there. Chewie can't stand there looking like a piece of furniture. He has to react to everybody's attitude. And, he can't say what he wants to verbally, so he either has to use his mouth, or eyes or body language. So, that was 50-70 percent. I expected to be fired the first week! But, fortunately, George saw what I was trying to do and here we are many years down the road. It was fortunate that I was able to bring that to the character.

Why do we all love Chewbacca?
Chewie's a teddy bear. Everybody has had a teddy bear at some stage in their lives. He's loveable; he's cuddly. If I don't do anything else, this is my chance to go into the history books. I'm already in there, so I'm quite happy.

When did you learn that there would be a new Star Wars movie?
I heard rumors way back, but it was just a question of waiting and seeing what was happening and whether it would be a series or just one movie. At that stage, I wasn't walking very well. I tore a tendon in my knee and wound up having both knees replaced. It took time to get kneecaps that would fit me, and I wasn't sure I would be able to walk well enough to make the film, which by then I had learned was actually going to happen. But I wanted to do it...

How was the table read?
The read-through was interesting because we met all the cast. I see Carrie, Anthony, and Mark

because of the conventions and signings we do. It was nice to see Harrison again and meet Andy Serkis, and all the newer guys, and see how the characters work in the story. I must say, Mark Hamill did a remarkable job as narrator. It was interesting; I've never done a read-through like that. Everybody was relaxed and could get to know one another again, and meet the new people.

Was it surreal for the old gang to be reunited?
It was wonderful. I hadn't seen Harrison in a good few years. It was so nice—a wonderful feeling. That kind of relationship lives on. It will always be Han and Chewie.

What did J.J. Abrams tell you prior to shooting the film?
"It's going to look as original as possible." It does. With the cockpit scenes, there are only two levers that actually work— there were only two in the original too!

"WITH THE COCKPIT SCENES, THERE ARE ONLY TWO LEVERS THAT ACTUALLY WORK—THERE WERE ONLY TWO IN THE ORIGINAL TOO!"

What was it like walking back onto the *Millennium Falcon* set?
I thought it was going to be good, so I decided not to be too over-enthusiastic. One person's idea of perfect is not everybody's. But, when I saw it I thought, *Yeah, this is back*. This is what it looked like when we shot the original films.

Has the suit been modified at all?
It's a completely new suit. It's better. It's lighter. It looks as good as the original one and it was built the same way. It was cut out, the mask was made, and all the fur was sewn into the yak hair stuff that they used for the costume. It works.

What makes *Star Wars* so special?
We have so many different fans. We have doctors, lawyers and professional people who would rather cosplay than play card games because it's more intelligent. They build costumes; they do research. They get together and as much as possible. They do good for everyone. They also collect for charity.

You've also got different generations now. The modern parents were the kids when we first started, and then the kids who are now 7-or 8-years-old. The kids love it because they're being brought up in this genre of Star Wars. Most of the fans we talk to were brought up on Episodes IV, V, and VI first, then swapped to I, II, III. I know the fans are all talking about this one. We hear: "What's the set like?" "Show us the set." "What can you tell us?" We're dealing with the fans all the time!

There are the fans that get tattoos and ask us to sign them. Then there are the different people we've had who have come up to our tables at conventions to say thank you for Chewie. It's kind of nice.

C-3PO™ & R2-D2™ with BB-8™

$109.99

AVAILABLE IN JUNE

STAR WARS™

ARTFX+ COLLECTIBLE TOYS

With updated sculpting and coloring to reflect their appearance in the latest installment of the STAR WARS saga, R2-D2 and C-3PO look better than ever! With special interchangeable parts, R2-D2 can be posed standing upright on two legs or leaning back on three while C-3PO has poseable arms. For extra stability, all three characters feature magnets in their feet, or in the base of his ball-shaped body in the case of BB-8, to help hold them in place on the included display stand. ARTFX+ Statues are fun-to-assemble pre-painted snap-fit kits that can be easily put together in seconds without glue or modeling skill. C-3PO stands just over 6 ½ inches, R2-D2 stands nearly 4 inches tall, and BB-8 is 2.7 inches tall in 1/10th scale. Display alongside other ARTFX+ snap-together figure kits based on characters from *STAR WARS: The Force Awakens* such as Captain Phasma or the First Order Stormtroopers to create your own exciting displays!

STAR WARS returns to the theaters in December with *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, and among the first to join Kotobukiya's popular line of ARTFX+ Snap-together Figure kits is none other than Captain Phasma! Beautifully sculpted in 1/10 scale, Captain Phasma's reflective chrome armor includes magnets in her feet for extra stability on the included base as well as multiple arm parts and a removable armorweave cape!

CAPTAIN PHASMA™

AVAILABLE IN APRIL $64.99

Kotobukiya's ARTFX+ lineup of Imperial Forces from the *STAR WARS* series continues with *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and the First Order Stormtrooper two pack! Sculpted in the ARTFX+ 1/10 scale, this army builder two pack features multiple arm and leg parts and two different blasters, allowing for up to 12 different poses to be displayed!

FIRST ORDER STORMTROOPER™ 2PACK

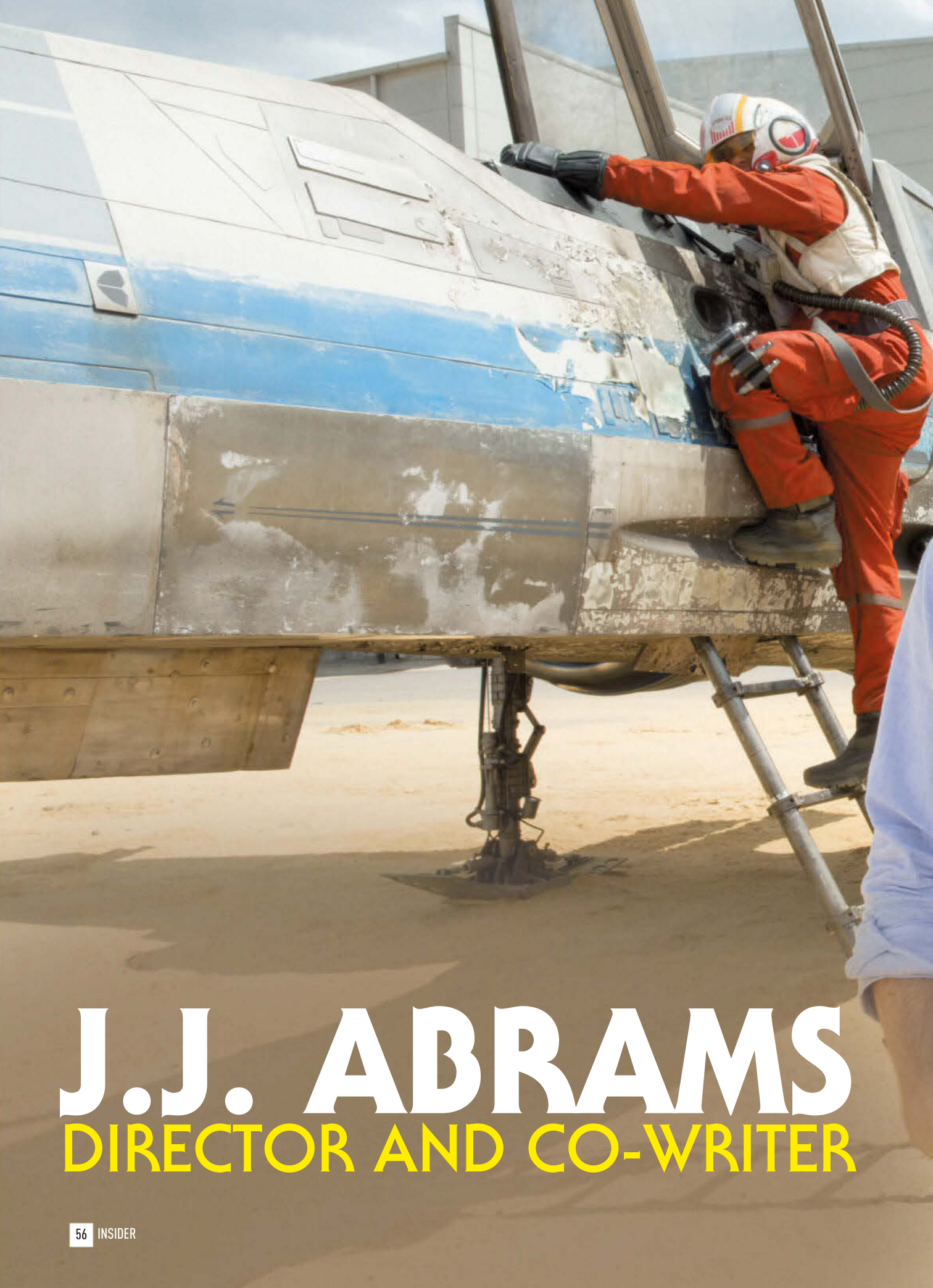
AVAILABLE IN JANUARY $84.99

CRAFTSMANSHIP KOTOBUKIYA

http://www.facebook.com/kotobukiya

Toys, Figures, Plastic model kits, Statues, Goods, Anime goods and much more...

© & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.
Prototypes shown; final products may vary.



J.J. ABRAMS
DIRECTOR AND CO-WRITER

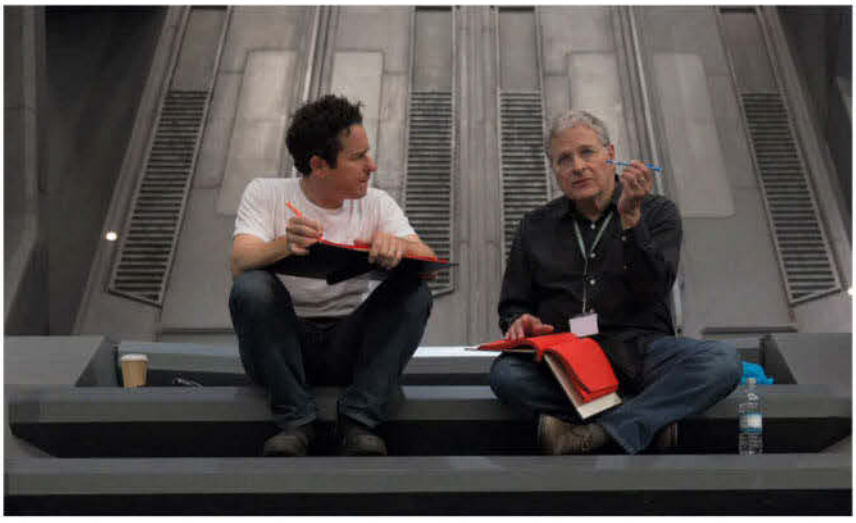
A LIFELONG FAN OF THE SAGA AND A TALENTED WRITER/DIRECTOR WITH HIT AFTER HIT UNDER HIS BELT, J.J. ABRAMS WAS THE NATURAL CHOICE TO TAKE THE HELM OF *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*!

***Star Wars Insider*: How were you approached to direct *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*?**

J.J. Abrams: I've known Kathleen Kennedy for a long time. She called and asked if I'd be interested in *Star Wars*, which was the most insanely flattering phone call someone could get. I said, "Thank you, but no thank you," immediately, because I felt like I had done a couple of films already based on franchises and didn't want to do it again. And the idea of doing *Star Wars* was terrifying at the beginning. It felt like for every obvious reason, it wasn't the right thing to do. In addition, my family had planned this trip to go away together, and we had this set sense of what the year would look like. Then Kathy [Kennedy] came in for a meeting, which I expected to be a polite decline, and she started talking about what this movie could be; the creative freedom to do something and the idea of what happens to these characters that we all know and love. She talked about the next step and the new characters that could be the focus of the story. She left the meeting, and I didn't say I didn't want to do it. I told her to let me think about it. My heart was pounding and my head was racing. I went downstairs to my wife, Katie, and told her I really wanted to do this. We talked about it and she said that if it was something I really wanted to do, that she understood. She allowed me to imagine what it would be to get involved in *Star Wars*.

What does *Star Wars* mean to you?

It's funny, but I remember the first time I saw the words *Star Wars*. It was in *Starlog* magazine. I remember seeing the words, and saying them aloud, "*Star Wars*." There was something about it that felt unusual, and that was before the film came out. But, it stuck with me. I was 11-years-old, and seeing the film for the first time was mind-expanding. It was full of heart and romanticism and optimism and comedy and incredible conflict, and certainly visual effects like I had never seen before. It was such a profound thing. Not just because the movie itself was so entertaining, but because it said anything is possible. It said that not only you could be anything you want to be, but there was a righteous fight to join. There were friends in the world and allies you'd come across; there was majesty that could come out of simplicity and intimate relationships. It was such a great story of the underdog, and told with such great imagination. When you look at *Star Wars*, it is unbelievable how much they got right. Not just the story and the characters and the casting. Not just the design, not just the music. All of it. When you look at all of it, you realize how much was nailed... even the references to things that happened



Clockwise, from left: J.J. Abrams shoots in Dubai; offering direction to BB-8; on set with co-writer, Lawrence Kasdan; sharing a laugh with frequent collaborator, Simon Pegg.

DAISY RIDLEY ON J.J. ABRAMS

"J.J. is amazing. Everyone adores him. He's very kind, and generous. I've never really been on a film set before, and he was so great at the beginning because I was so nervous. He made sure everyone on set was feeling great. There's no one unworthy of a hello and a thank you. There have been so many moments when he's gotten on the mic and told everyone that the work they're doing is incredible, which it is. They're getting that warmth from him that is needed. In such a big film, personal relationships can be lost. But, because he is who he is, they're not at all. Everyone feels praise. Everyone feels loved. Everyone feels appreciated. That is so important. He's created this incredible world, and in the real world he's this incredible man as well."

"WHEN YOU LOOK AT *STAR WARS*, IT IS UNBELIEVEABLE HOW MUCH THEY GOT RIGHT. ALL OF IT."

off-camera. The things you don't know. You don't know so much in that movie, like what the Empire wants or the possibility that Darth Vader is Luke's father, or that Leia is Luke's sister. All these things exist, but none are explicit. Yet, it has that sense that this world is real and exists and is expansive. It felt beautifully considered and wonderfully told. For me, as a kid, it bowled me over. It's a world I wanted to get back to immediately, and I was in good company.

What is *Star Wars*?

Star Wars is many things. At the core, it's this family saga. It's a family drama. It is about finding your own strength and finding connections with people you wouldn't anticipate knowing. It's about secrets and causes and joining something larger than yourself. Good and evil. At the core of it, there are characters that you love. Characters that make you laugh and make you care. There's this authenticity in *Star Wars, The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* where you're feeling this wonderful family, even though they're not related. It's a family of underdogs working together. It's such a powerful feeling. We all want to feel that if things got desperate, we'd run into someone that we'd instantly love, whether we love them in a brotherly, sisterly way or something else. There's a feeling that the world of *Star Wars* is full of allies that you might run into to help in the fight against a villain that you might not otherwise be able to confront.

While there was never a doubt that the visual opportunities were enormous—the worlds we'd travel to, the creatures we'd meet, the weapons, and ships, and landscapes—none of that matters if you don't love the people in the ships or if you don't love the people who are choosing to fight, or in some cases run. So, the core of this story had to be what makes any story work—the characters. The fundamental thing that Lawrence Kasdan and I were focusing on, was how to make these characters people that we immediately care about and, at least, are intrigued by. How do we make them have choices and have behavior that we pull back from, or raise questions about them that we want to understand? It was the thing that was most important for us in the process. We wanted to find characters that we wanted to watch in a story. We knew there would be no shortage of obstacles, and challenges, and evil to throw in their path.

At the same time, we needed a villain in the shadow of Darth Vader, one of the greatest movie villains ever. How do you create a bad guy that works in his shadow? Part of the beauty of the answer was in the character acknowledging himself that he was in the shadow of this character. He was

"THE *MILLENNIUM FALCON* IS AS MUCH A RETURNING CHARACTER IN THE FILM AS THE PEOPLE."

as aware of Vader as we are. We wanted to give his villainy a conflict and not make him necessarily the mustache-twirling, finished villain, but rather make him someone who is broken. A villain in process; a villain in training. We wanted to make him someone who is aspiring to certain greatness on the Dark Side. That was as much of a critical discussion between the two of us as anything.

Why was shooting so much of the film practically, important?

While I knew there would be no shortage of computer generated work being done in this movie as an enormous visual effects film, the standard had to be authenticity. The standard had to be reality. I've never been a fan of movies that are mostly CG. I felt that there was a feeling as a kid when I saw *Star Wars* the first time that it was all practical and real—things like being outside the Sandcrawler with Luke and Uncle Owen when they first come by C-3PO and R2-D2, and seeing those treads there. There was no doubt it was a physical, tangible, real thing. You knew it when you saw the movie. There were things like the hangar in the Death Star. The look of it, the scale of it. There were moments that they got in camera that had a scale, when you look back on how they did it. In some cases they were large sets, in other cases, brilliant forced perspective, using darkness to imply the hangar in the rebel base. It didn't feel anything other than real. So I felt that it was really important with the creatures, with the sets, that we make it feel as real as possible. When you're watching the movie, you just know it's real. The way the lights hit it, the way the creatures are blending in.

With CG, since you can do infinite points of articulation on a character, there's a fluidity to it that diminishes it. You simply know it wasn't there. But when you have one of the incredible creatures, or animatronic masks, that Neal Scanlan and his team created, you have something physical and real. While it might have 16 or 24 points of articulation, it has 100 percent authenticity because you see it in the moment. It's the difference between looking at a CG version of Yoda, and the puppet Yoda. The puppet Yoda is so simplistic, but you go with it because it's just there. Then, the actors

Clockwise, from right: Abrams and a furry friend examine their work; directing newcomer Daisy Ridley in Dubai; checking out a shot with Oscar Isaac.

ADAM DRIVER ON J.J. ABRAMS

"What he does with such ease and grace and collaboration, that is so rare. As a *Star Wars* fan, I am impressed with the way that he's making everything grounded in reality and actually tactile, and not a green-screen. He's making the movie that I want to see and that you want to see. I can't think of anyone who's better suited to direct *Star Wars*."

working with it, legitimize it. You just know it's real. Having BB-8 be a nearly 100 percent practical character—not only was it great because it looked better, but we have given the cast someone to work with so they weren't pretending that someone was there. Daisy and John look at BB-8 as a co-star and as a real personality. That is a testament, not just to the performers, but to having a physical and tangible real character in the film.

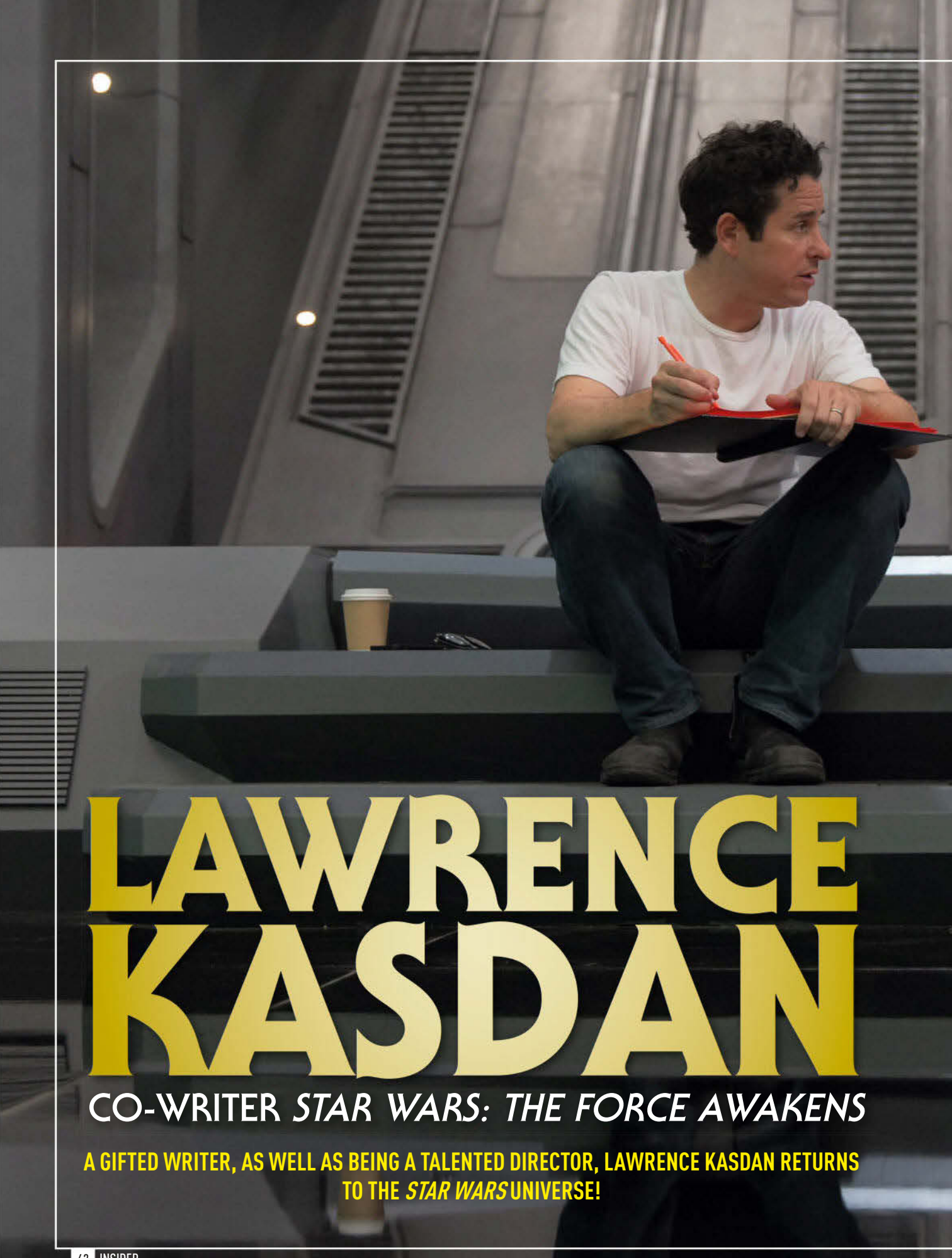
Was it a challenge to recreate the *Millennium Falcon*?

The *Millennium Falcon* is as much a returning character in the film as the people. There's a very weird feeling going back to something you know so well. It's like saying, "I'm going to open this magic door. And, behind this magic door is your bedroom at 9-years-old." You can walk into that bedroom, and you can feel it, and smell it, and open drawers in your desk and find the things you had. What would be in that desk? What would be under your bed? That feeling of, it's yours, and you know it. So, when you go back to it, it has to look like what you remember.

So, we made sure we almost forensically recreated the *Falcon*. We had the most incredible crew. Our art director, Mark Harris, who worked on *The Empire Strikes Back*, was like a scientist figuring out how the *Falcon* changed from *Star Wars* to *Empire*. The size of the cockpit expanded, and the scale of the ship got bigger in the second film. We realized that with the stuff you thought was canon, big changes were being made. You can't adhere to what you think it was, and do what they did. If something needs adjusting, go for it. But, aesthetically, it can't look or sound different than the ship you know. An incredible amount of human hours were put into it, and making it as we know it.

How did you come up with the idea of having a central character that is a stormtrooper?

It was a pitch that Larry [Kasdan] had when we were talking about the back-story of these characters. This idea that there was a guy underneath the uniform that became a main character in the film, and one of our central heroes, was interesting. The only time we had seen people in stormtrooper uniforms was when Luke and Han put them on to help save Leia. It felt like a great beginning of something. Whether he was a spy, or a turncoat, we knew it was an exciting way into this world. I loved that it spoke to who are you behind that mask. The other thing that having a main character as a stormtrooper did was, it thematically connected to this idea of "Who are these people behind these masks?" All the new characters when we meet them, are masked. Kylo-Ren is masked; Rey is masked when you first meet her, and Finn.



LAWRENCE KASDAN

CO-WRITER *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*

A GIFTED WRITER, AS WELL AS BEING A TALENTED DIRECTOR, LAWRENCE KASDAN RETURNS TO THE *STAR WARS* UNIVERSE!

***Star Wars Insider*: How did you get involved in *Star Wars*?**

Lawrence Kasdan: I first met George Lucas in 1977. I had sold a screenplay to Steven Spielberg. Steven and George decided, based on that screenplay, that they wanted me to write *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. I was thrilled to do that. I was brand-new in the business and it was an amazing film to get for your first job. When I was finished with it, I took it up to Marin County to deliver it by hand to George Lucas. He threw it on the desk, and said, "C'mon, let's go to lunch." When we went to lunch, he said he was in trouble with *The Empire Strikes Back* because Leigh Brackett, who was working on it, had passed away. The draft was nothing like what George needed or wanted. He asked me to write *The Empire Strikes Back*. I was concerned because he hadn't read *Raiders of the Lost Ark,* but he said he would read it that evening and if he didn't like it, he would retract the offer. He read it, and I began working on *The Empire Strikes Back* several days later. It turned out to be a wonderful experience working with George and Irvin Kershner, who was the director of *The Empire Strikes Back*. We did it in six weeks. They were already building sets in England, so there was no time to waste. George had a story and I wrote the screenplay. When that was over, I went back to my original intention, which was to become a movie director.

I met Alan Ladd, Jr., who was running 20th Century Fox and releasing the *Star Wars* movies. He was offering me jobs to write, and I told him I didn't want to write; I wanted to direct. He asked what I wanted to direct, and I told him the story of *Body Heat*, which became my first film. After it was written, Ladd said he would make it, but he asked that I get someone to look over my shoulder as I was a first-time director. I went to George Lucas and asked him to do it, and he agreed. George was very generous with me and so supportive in many ways.

After *Body Heat* I moved on to my next movie, which was *The Big Chill*. Then George came to me and asked me to write *Return of the Jedi*, which became my second *Star Wars* movie, directed by Richard Marquand.

How did you first meet Kathleen Kennedy?

After Steven Spielberg bought my original screenplay, *Continental Divide*, he introduced me to George Lucas. We were all going to do *Raiders of the Lost Ark* together. I had no place to work on the screenplay, so I worked in Steven's office while he was off directing *1941*. So, I wrote *Raiders of the Lost Ark* at Steven Spielberg's desk and, true to his word, he barely showed up those six months. Kathy Kennedy was Steven's assistant at that time, in 1977, and she really had not been there very long. She was in and out a good bit between the set and the office, but we became friends. So we've had a long, good friendship. We have vacation homes near each other, and we've been through a lot, with a lot of movies under the bridge. We haven't worked like this for a long, long

"THE ORIGINAL *STAR WARS* TRILOGY IS FUNKY. IT PUTS ON A SHOW."

This page: Former art director, Norman Reynolds, and former producer Robert Watts, reunite with Kathleen Kennedy and Lawrence Kasdan on set at Pinewood Studios!

time, but it's great to be back working with Kathy. When George and Kathy decided to reignite the saga, they came to talk to me about writing some of it.

When did you first meet J.J. Abrams?
I had met J.J. about five years before all this started, at a charity event in Hollywood. He was very friendly and I was happy to meet him. I had a wonderful, positive impression of him. After I became involved in the new saga, the question came up as to who was going to direct Episode VII. Kathy Kennedy was very generous in including me in that process. When we went to talk to J.J., who was everybody's first choice, I started to get to know J.J. for the first time. That was in early 2013. We all went to his office and talked about what a new *Star Wars* would be like. His ideas about what should happen in the next trilogy were like mine, and I was enthusiastic about the idea that he'd direct it. We were all thrilled when he agreed to do it.

Do you remember the key elements that needed to be in the film?
In talking to J.J. Abrams, right from the start, there was a meeting of minds about the

things we wanted the new *Star Wars* to be. How it would be similar to the first trilogy. How would it be different, because times have changed and it's been imitated so much. It's hard to make things look fresh. But all our thoughts were similar. The movies had to get back to tactile [effects and sets], rather than CGI. One of the wonderful things about the first trilogy is that it's kind of funky and puts on a show. The creatures in the first one are crude, but become more sophisticated in *The Empire Strikes Back*. Then came more effects and sophistication.

But even through *Return of the Jedi*, there's a tactile feel like we're actually on a set somewhere shooting this movie. All of us wanted to get back to that feeling, which we thought maybe had drifted away in subsequent movies. So, that was common ground. Then, things that interested us in the story were similar. It was a family saga, and we talked about how we would continue to play it out in ways that are very interesting not just for new generations but for the people who saw it originally, 40 years ago. So, you're paying tribute to a tradition, a saga that has made an impact beyond anyone's imagination. You're trying to be supportive of it, loyal, honest, and respectful of it, and at the same time, move it forward.

How much did you talk about balancing visual effects with the practical?

We discussed balancing the effects and the physical properties of the movie endlessly. It was the primary issue for us. How do we take a human story with relatable themes and keep it feeling like a real story that's been done by actors on real sets?

The sets certainly do feel like *Star Wars*. How did they go about getting that iconic feel?

Rick Carter and Darren Gilford, the production designers, created an environment that's so powerfully redolent of the *Star Wars* saga.

"I USED ONE WORD FROM THE BEGINNING, IT MUST 'DELIGHT.' IF WE DO THAT, WE'LL HAVE SUCCEEDED."

It has to do with the shape of the lights, the shine on the floor, the shape of the corridors. Creatures you remember from 40 years ago are in this movie, and that's kind of fantastic. And, Michael Kaplan, the costume designer, totally entered the universe of *Star Wars* in this, his first *Star Wars* movie, and created a whole new generation that fit in with *A New Hope*.

Did you and J.J. Abrams feel that the lead was always going to be a strong female?

There was never a question. It was not just J.J. and I, but Kathy and everyone else involved as well. We aimed very strongly toward one of the protagonists being a woman right from the get-go. It cries out for that. Leia was a wonderful character, but she was one of the only women in the original trilogy. This saga demands more in female leadership. We want to see more characters like that. As movies go, we'll see more. We knew that this one had to be centered on both a girl and a boy.

Was it fun to revisit the classic *Star Wars* characters?

It's great to come back to characters you love. Leia and Han are great people to write for, and now I've done it a lot. For someone who is their age, there's a poignancy about how we lose our physical resilience. We deal with many things over the a course of a lifetime. Some take a toll and some show up in lines in our faces. When you stop resisting it, it can be a glorious thing. You can appreciate itand you're grateful for this journey that put you through so many different paces. When you see Carrie Fisher and you see Harrison Ford, you see all that. We've followed them since they were so young. They grew up on camera. For Harrison, it's been non-stop movie stardom, which is a burden in itself. Very few people have had the long, varied career that Harrison has. Harrison was in *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, but he was also in *Witness*, *Clear and Present Danger*, and so many more. He played fear and aspiration, and had heroism and

J.J. ABRAMS ON LAWRENCE KASDAN

"One of the most surreal and wonderful things was getting to know and collaborate with Lawrence Kasdan. He's one of the most thoughtful, brilliant, considered, opinionated, funny, collaborative people I've ever met. He's a hero of mine. If the movie didn't go forward or if something went wrong, I wouldn't have changed the investment of time. If there were an auction to work with Larry Kasdan in this way, I'd never stop bidding. There I was working on scenes with Han Solo, and Larry would be like, "I don't think Han would say that. It's not very Han." I'd be like, okay, and I'd think, *Well, he would know. He wrote Han Solo in some of the best moments in cinema history."*

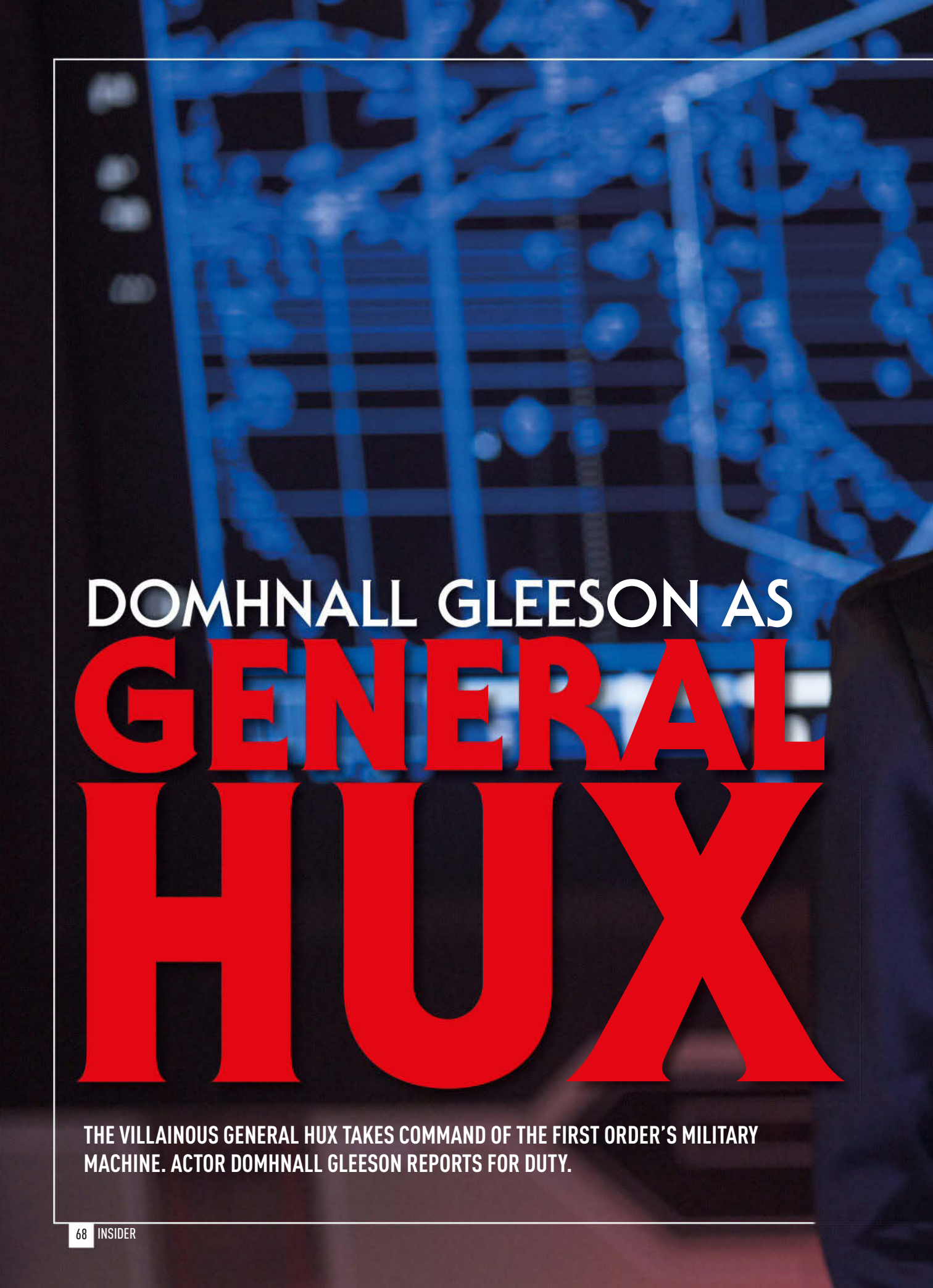
Clockwise, from top left: Kylo Ren surveys the destructive power of the Starkiller; Finn and Poe prepare for battle; Rey and BB-8 meet on Jakku; Maz Kanata passes Luke Skywalker's lightsaber to Leia.

neuroses. I don't think anyone can watch Harrison walk back onto the *Millennium Falcon* as Han and not be thrilled. He looks so right and so comfortable.

In the same way, Carrie Fisher had a cerebral nature at 21 and she's got it now. We're trying to have everyone come through with who they are. The dream in a movie is to bring out what's best in an actor, whether they're 12 or 70. Acting is magical; it's mysterious. Why someone can do it, I could never figure out, and I spent my whole life with actors. I wanted to be an actor and I couldn't.

What is your hope for this film?

I used one word from the beginning, it must "delight." When you have John Williams writing the music, you're part of the way there. When you have this group of craftsmen creating the images, you're part of the way there. When [director of photography] Dan Mindel shoots a movie, you're going to be delighted and when J.J. directs a movie, you'll be delighted. We all know that there's going to be an audience for this movie, but we want them to feel satisfied when it's over. We want them to say, "It delighted me, made me laugh, made me excited, and the images affected my body in a way I have no control over." That's what great movies do. That's what anything that really hits the chord does. You sit in an auditorium with an orchestra, or a single guitar, or a rock concert and they are somehow capable of touching something in you that you have no control over. It's beyond reason, beyond criticism, beyond preconceptions or disappointment. I was engaged, I was enraptured, I was delighted for a certain amount of time. If we do that, we'll have succeeded.



DOMHNALL GLEESON AS GENERAL HUX

THE VILLAINOUS GENERAL HUX TAKES COMMAND OF THE FIRST ORDER'S MILITARY MACHINE. ACTOR DOMHNALL GLEESON REPORTS FOR DUTY.

Star Wars Insider: Who is General Hux?

Domhnall Gleeson: General Hux is probably one of the bad guys, depending on your point of view. He works with Kylo Ren and Supreme Leader Snoke, and is in charge of the military operation. He isn't a particularly nice fella!

What is it like working on these sets?

It's been kind of crazy walking around here. The whole experience so far has been amazing for me because so little of it has been green screen and I've been able to reach out and touch everything. Everything is right in front of you, which just makes acting so much easier. When you step on set, you feel the power of the whole thing coming for you when you've got so many extras and people with the gear. You feel in charge of a big group of people. It's been wonderful. I thought that with green screen coming in, I wasn't going to get to be on sets like this and that those days were over. They'd build in the three things you stand on and the rest would be green screen as far as you could see. That made me sad, because when you're a kid and you think about what it must be like to be in movies, the scale of the ones you love was part of it. So, for me just walking around and seeing all this stuff and putting my hands on it, and it being tactile and present, is the stuff you imagined when you were a kid that you didn't think would happen anymore. I know how lucky I am to be on sets like this and I'm enjoying it, that's for sure.

What do you think of Michael Kaplan's costume designs?

Michael has done an amazing job. It absolutely feels like *Star Wars*. You look around and you immediately know what universe you're in. You wouldn't have to just look at the set because if you look at the costumes, you'd immediately recognize the world. But, it's also slightly different than what they did before. Hux has to carry an aura of power and a preoccupation of being in charge of things. The clothes correct your posture. So, it's been brilliant and hilarious to put on those clothes every morning.

"I LOCKED EYES WITH SOME PEOPLE WHO WEREN'T ACTORS AT VARIOUS TIMES AND THERE WAS A FEELING OF, ISN'T THIS COOL?"

How did you get the call?

I didn't have any meeting or any audition. But I wanted to read the script before, because they keep it tight. Then I got call to meet J.J. Abrams, so I flew over to meet him. I met with him and Lawrence Kasdan, which was a thrill in itself. J.J. told me about the character, what he was and what he did. They made an offer, and the next day was the table read with the cast. So, I stayed overnight and the next day I was in the same room as these legends and new people who will go on to be legends themselves. It was pretty cool and pretty fast—it all happened in two days!

What was the table read like?

Carrie Fisher was there. Harrison Ford was there. Mark Hamill was there. Peter Mayhew was there. Everybody you'd hope to be there was there, plus all these new faces as well. I'd seen John Boyega in stuff. I'd seen Adam Driver in stuff and met him before. Andy Serkis, obviously. It was really exciting to look around at this amazing group of actors. It was particularly cool that you know some of them from *Star Wars*, and we are all here for *Star Wars*, and we're going to read it out loud. I really got to sit back and watch these really cool people do their lines and kill it. It was a brilliant experience. I locked eyes with some people who weren't actors at various times and there was a feeling of, *Isn't this cool*?

What will the movie bring to the *Star Wars* universe?

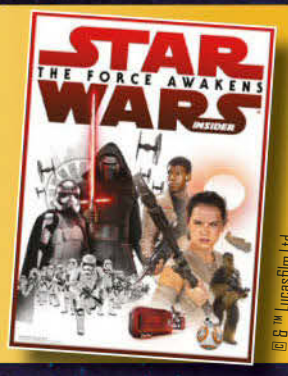
How it feels to me is that J.J. Abrams is a very skilled director, and he's got this unusual combination of doing big movies in terms of scale and budget, but also working well with actors and telling real stories. All those things together are very unusual to get in the same person. A lot of people are good at one or two of those things. This is large-scale filmmaking that feels like a real story and isn't just effects. There's a real energy in the performances. They really get everyone going before a take and you're reminded that this is *Star Wars*, and that it requires a step up. So, I hope the energy will be in the right place. I hope the story will move forward in a very interesting way. So, in the same way you'd watch one of the original three and not know what's coming next, I hope we can do that as well.

SUBSCRIBE NOW
TO GET A FREE EXCLUSIVE T-SHIRT!

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE!

SIGN UP TODAY AND GET ALL THIS:

- **FREE** light side or dark side **T-SHIRT!**
- **EXCLUSIVE COVER** with every issue!
- **SAVE 22%** on the cover price!

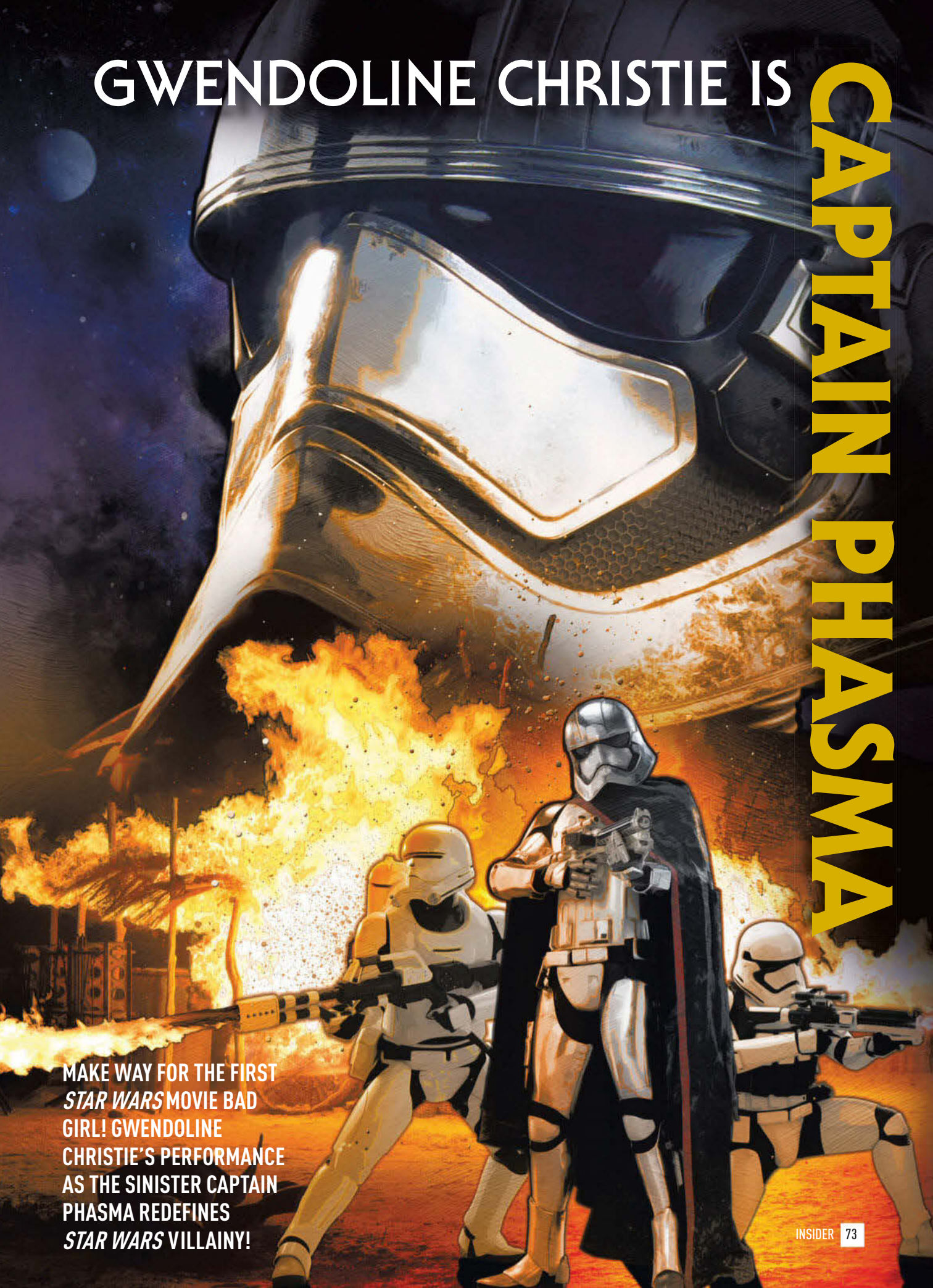


© & ™ LucasFilm Ltd.

SUBCRIBE ONLINE, VISIT:
TITANMAGAZINES.COM/INSIDER162
OR CALL 1-800-261-6502

*Free T-shirt offer only valid with U.S. , Canadian print orders. Offer valid until supplies last. Sizes available in small, medium, large , extra large and extra extra large.**Free delivery for U.S. orders only. Canadian price includes $15 shipping and handling fee.

GWENDOLINE CHRISTIE IS CAPTAIN PHASMA



MAKE WAY FOR THE FIRST *STAR WARS* MOVIE BAD GIRL! GWENDOLINE CHRISTIE'S PERFORMANCE AS THE SINISTER CAPTAIN PHASMA REDEFINES *STAR WARS* VILLAINY!

***Star Wars Insider*: Who is Captain Phasma?**
Gwendoline Christie: Captain Phasma is the captain of the stormtroopers. She is a malevolent force. She is not a force for good, and she takes particular pleasure in her cruelty.

How does it feel to be the first on-screen female stormtrooper?
I'm absolutely thrilled to hear that Captain Phasma is the first female stormtrooper of any rank, and, of course, I'm even more thrilled to be playing that part. It's exciting that something as iconic as *Star Wars* has embraced the future and has embraced the world's need for gender balance and female empowerment. I hope it inspires generations of women everywhere to go forward.

How was your first day on set?
I walked onto set in the costume. It was a dream come true! I was greeted by such a warm group of people that had been working together for months on this really thrilling project. J.J. and I went through the scene. My heart was racing. I was so overexcited. But nothing prepared me for when I saw the entire set behind me, lit up, and full of characters I recognized from the *Star Wars* films that I was shown as a little girl.

Do you have any fun *Star Wars* recollections?
I was brought up on *Star Wars* films and adored them. They included, not only these flamboyant, futuristic elements that were always interesting to me, but also this idea of the hero's journey. It's fundamentally about the human race's need for good. I was intrigued by the character of Jabba the Hutt. He had poor Princess Leia chained up and I adored how feisty Carrie Fisher was. I could really sense and feel her fire, and it was important to me as a little girl to see that kind of woman. To see her running around, being powerful, being involved in so much action, was definitely a big influence.

How do you feel about the costume?
The costume is absolutely sensational. It is restrictive, but I think it gives us an insight into Captain Phasma. This is a woman who is wearing armor, but her femininity is still displayed. She doesn't try to hide it; it only empowers her further. The costume takes around 45 minutes to put on. It certainly makes me stand up straight. I have a really fantastic pair of boots underneath it all, which I think gives the foundation of Captain Phasma. They're incredibly well-made and very hard-wearing—sensible but stylish.

How is it to act in a helmet?
When I was a teenager, I used to do a lot of Lecoq mime and physical theatre work, and I also did it at my drama school, Drama Centre London. We had a fantastic movement teacher who, with the use of masks, would release the actor. So, I feel as if I can get away with a lot more then when my own dear face is exposed. This glorious, majestic helmet, whose edges look as if they could cut you like a knife, seems as if it could cut through the night. It's futuristic, but has a medieval element to it. When I put the helmet on, I feel like I could probably get away with blue murder!

Captain Phasma's weapon looks deadly. Did you like using it?
It's very timely that I should, at last, have a gun. Captain Phasma has a phenomenal blaster. I've always wanted to work with a blaster. It's the most beautifully crafted thing. It does look real. It's quite weighty and very substantial. Everything on it works, although I haven't tried to blast anyone with it yet. It's just so beautifully designed. I have to be careful not to put my finger on the trigger, because a light source will be released. But, again, that helps to transform you as an actor and gives the character real weight. There is a real feeling that Captain Phasma isn't afraid to use that blaster and has used it before.

Did you enjoy playing such an evil character?
Captain Phasma is an evil character. But, it doesn't aid me as an actor to think of any character as evil, because then one just ends up playing a stereotype. In my mind, Captain Phasma gains particular enjoyment through her acts of cruelty because she is the only woman of rank as a stormtrooper. I would believe that would have been a very difficult path to take, and she would have been treated quite brutally. So, it's her misguided opportunity to exercise that hate on those around her.

> "WHEN I PUT THE HELMET ON, I FEEL I COULD PROBABLY GET AWAY WITH BLUE MURDER!"

Is there an element of fear in people for a woman behind a mask?
I think that when female characters are evil, it is a shock to us. We tend to associate women with being the kinder sex. So, when a woman makes the choice to be deliberately cruel, it's seen as not in her nature. So, she is betraying her true nature, and anybody who does that is capable of anything!

How do you keep the femininity while also being menacing?
From the second I put the costume on, I really felt like I wanted to have some fun with it. I wanted the character to have femininity and a heavy dose of sass, because I don't think we've seen that in a stormtrooper before.

What does it mean to be a powerful women in *Star Wars*, and to be on the dark side?

I do think that in *Star Wars*, the iconic character of Princess Leia, for example, is a woman who has strength and the courage of her convictions, and isn't afraid to protect herself and to stand up for herself. Strong female characters interest me, because they don't have to be brutal. They don't have to be physical. I'm incredibly lucky to be playing the part of a female character that is well-rounded and that we see women, not just strong and good, but strong and evil, so we get to see all those aspects of human nature. They are all represented and we can enjoy them. There is something faintly irresistible about Captain Phasma. I think it might be in the costume rather than me. Again, I think it's forward-thinking and modern for *Star Wars* to have that kind of character archetype and to investigate that side of femininity.

Would you say that Phasma is the antithesis to Daisy Ridley's Rey?

I find it very exciting that *Star Wars* has continued their tradition of strong female characters and that the legacy of Princess Leia lives on in Daisy Ridley as Rey. She is a source of good and the power of good. Captain Phasma is the opposite of that. Captain Phasma is when someone chooses the dark side of human nature and chooses to be self-serving. I find that quite exciting!

What is it like to work with J.J. Abrams?

Working with J.J. Abrams is a real dream come true. I went and saw *Star Trek* at the cinema two or three times, and watched it again subsequently. I grew up with *Star Trek*; it was always put on for me to observe. But, there was something about J.J. Abrams' interpretation, and I feel it on *Star Wars* too, that brings modernity, freshness, a real wit, and a relevance to what is occurring in our world today. But, it is not a message that is delivered in a heavy way; it is a message that is delivered with entertainment and truth. The performances that he teases out of his actors have always been extraordinary. The moment I heard that *Star Wars* was coming back, I begged to be in this film. The fact that J.J. was working on it, too, felt like a formula that would be irresistible. He is just the nicest man and so full of enthusiasm, intelligence and insight. He has a gloriously fast brain that is so brilliant and imaginative and moves around constantly. He's very free and not at all precious. He allows you to work freely and with ease in the scenes. Walking into a project that means as much to me as this does, and as overwhelming as it is, has just been fun and full of great spirit.

"THERE IS SOMETHING FAINTLY IRRESISTIBLE ABOUT CAPTAIN PHASMA."

The first day I got to work with J.J., his enthusiasm was totally infectious. He allowed me to do what I want, but managed to conjure from me something more and something different. What I liked so much about working with him is he releases you. He releases you to be as dark, and as strong, as you can be. I say conjure deliberately, because he's like a magician.

Are you excited at the idea of the Phasma action figure?

When I think about when I was 5-or 6-years-old, and I was given these *Star Wars* toys to look at—great reverence was paid to them—I could never have dreamed that I would *become* a *Star Wars* figure! I can't get over it now. Everyone is going to want to collect her. Little girls, little boys. Big boys. Big girls. Those of advanced years! What's not to love about a Captain Phasma doll?

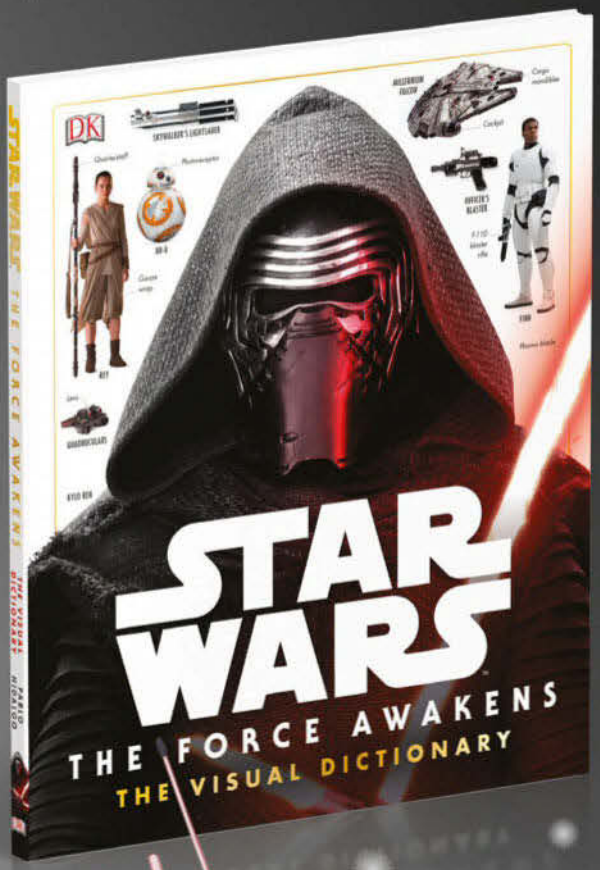
Can you talk about how fans will enjoy this film?

I'm particularly thrilled to be in this *Star Wars* film because it encapsulates those wonderful, magical elements of the movies that we all know and love—those particular things that really tick our boxes, things like the creatures in it, the general feeling and the aesthetics. I know that so many elements that are burned into my mind wonderfully are in this.

What interests me is the fact that women are represented more than ever. They are represented with strength and positivity, and strength and negativity. It's that forward vision, coupled with all these elements that we're familiar with that we've all grown up with that excites us so much. It's not precious. It's entertainment. I'm just so excited, and I truly think that it's a recipe people are going to adore. I can't wait for it to come out, if my mind hasn't melted by then with how exciting this all is!

STAR WARS

THE BEST PRESENTS AREN'T FAR, FAR AWAY....



Disney | LUCASFILM

© & TM 2015 LUCASFILM LTD. Used Under Authorization.

LEGO, the LEGO logo, the Brick and Knob configurations and the Minifigure are trademarks of the LEGO Group.
© 2015 The LEGO Group. Produced by DK Publishing under license from the LEGO Group.

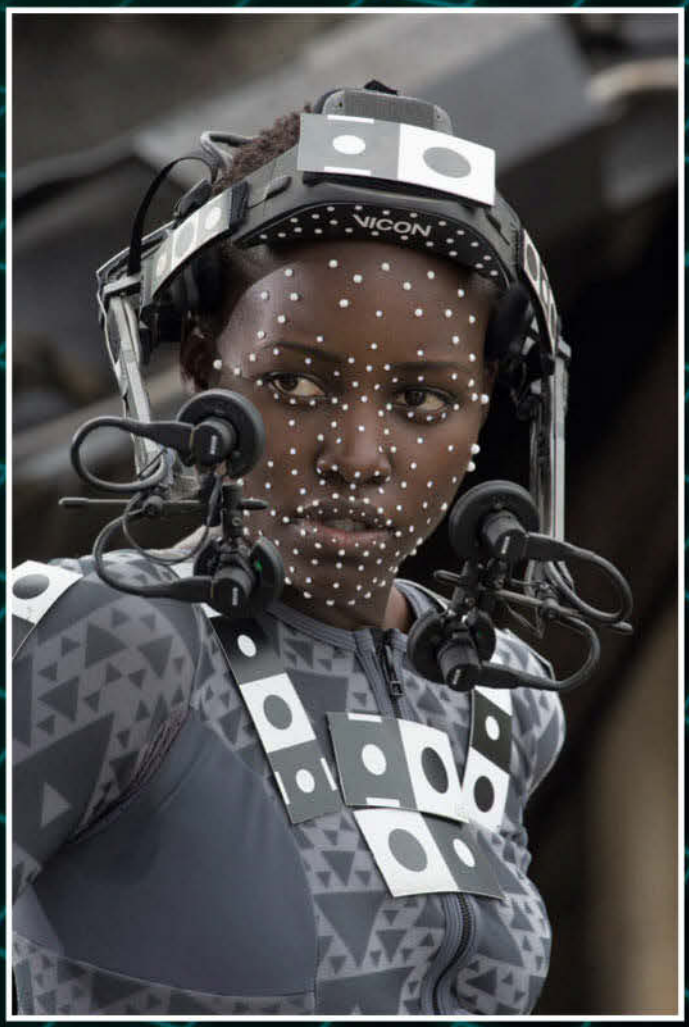
DK

A WORLD OF IDEAS:
SEE ALL THERE IS TO KNOW

www.dk.com

LUPITA NYONG'O IS MAZ KANATA

THE MYSTERIOUS MAZ KANATA PLAYS A PIVOTAL ROLE IN *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*. ACTRESS LUPITA NYONG'O DISCOVERED A WHOLE NEW ACTING DISCIPLINE WHEN SHE BROUGHT HER TO LIFE...



***Star Wars Insider*: How did you first get involved?**

Lupita Nyong'o: I met with J.J. Abrams in early 2014 and he told me about this new project he was doing, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, and that he was keen to work with me. Around May I got a call, and that he had this part called Maz Kanata. He wanted me to read it and see whether I was interested. I was in Morocco at the time, so he sent someone with the script for me to look at. I looked at it, and only had enough time to be fascinated with this character, and I said I'd love to play it.

Were you a *Star Wars* fan?

I did grow up watching *Star Wars*. It used to come on TV on public holidays in Kenya, where I grew up. I loved it at the time. I wasn't conscious of the kind of phenomenon it was. I loved it for what it was. I particularly loved R2-D2 and C-3PO, and, later, the Ewoks. It came to me at a time when everything on screen was real.

It wasn't until I got involved that I realized what a cultural reference it is in America. It's everywhere! There are images of stormtroopers in the most unlikely of places. Being involved, I guess you just see it more.

Did you get a sense of J.J. Abrams' vision for the film?

I know that J.J. has been fascinated with motion capture and was keen to have it in his film. It's the embracing of the old ways of doing things and the new. And that's what we have on set. Everything feels so real, and then there's me in this headcam, with lights shining in my face, walking around, covered in dots. I found it really cool, and I think that's what J.J. was going for. Where the old and the new can embrace each other and one doesn't necessarily discredit the other.

What do you know about motion capture?

Before I got into the suit, I knew about Andy Serkis and that he was the man behind iconic motion capture roles like Gollum. I didn't know much else. I watched the making of *The Lord of the Rings* way back when, but it was all extremely new to me. I knew I wouldn't be in costume. I had no idea what the motion capture suit would look like and all the dots that would be required on my face. I did not know any of that. So, I've been learning on the job. It is quite a fascinating process. The number of people behind this one character is just spellbinding. And they all know what they're doing. What's great for me is I don't have to know what they're doing! They do it around me, and my responsibility is to just remain true to the character. We've gone about the motion capture differently in this film. The principal photography for me has been more of a technical rehearsal. There's a whole other process where we zero in on my performance and get the nuances of that. So, I don't know what other people have done, but it's been incredible to have the opportunity to be on set with everyone else and feel what this world feels like before going into a more technical space. It can only help.

What is a typical day on set for you?

A typical day for me on set involves me coming into makeup—actually for the dots! There are 149 dots put on my face every morning. We've gotten it down to between 45 minutes to an hour, depending on how cooperative the glue is being. I suit

"THE FIRST TIME I CAME ONTO SET IN THAT [MOTION CAPTURE] SUIT, IT WAS THE MOST ALIENATING THING IN THE WORLD."

up, and then I have markers. My suit is gray with triangles everywhere, then I have markers that make it look like a road sign is velcroed onto the suit and kneepads and restraints to help with my mobility. Then, a headcam is put on my head with four cameras that shine a ring of LED lights onto my face to capture every movement my face makes. Then, we begin...

How did it feel to come onto set with that suit?

The first time I came onto set in that suit, it was the most alienating thing in the world. Because there are lights shining on my face, everyone is drawn to look at me. I was fighting nerves, butterflies in my stomach, and feeling very self-conscious! I was still trying to figure out how to be this completely different person in this suit and to have an understanding of my physicality and the space around me. It was bizarre.

Have you worked with Andy Serkis?

Andy has been very supportive, giving me insight into the process. Andy has encouraged me to let go of the oddness of the things I'm wearing and to just find the character as I would in any other circumstance. That is the best way to remain reinforced. Also, I've had a few opportunities to see my avatar work live. To see how my movement immediately affects how my avatar moves. It has been very enlightening to have that experience. It's so odd to look in the mirror and see a completely different animal looking back at you. Hopefully, it will be very rewarding when we finally see Maz in this film, and not me.

Were you involved with how Maz would look?

I saw a version of Maz that was pretty far along when I got on set. They had at least established her dimensions and were still working on the texture of her skin, the color of it, and her costume. I've seen the development of her costume a lot. But, at each step I've been so fascinated to see how much thought goes into every single detail. Just looking at her tells a story. It's really exciting to see what the art department is bringing to her. That's the cool thing about motion capture. The work of the performance is truly shared by everyone.

How has it been working with John Boyega and Daisy Ridley?

It's been such a pleasure to work with them. They're both so energetic and they're really taking charge of this space. I came in learning from them because they know way more about what's going on, having all the time on set and being a big part of the entire film. John Boyega is such a *Star Wars* professor. I'm the one going to him and asking what's going on or to tell me about *The Clone Wars*. He has it at his fingertips. It's been great to have a lead that knows so much about the universe. Daisy has been a refreshing energy. She brings such sweetness to her work. It's been great working with both of them.

What do you think the audience will look forward to the most?

I hope that the audiences get a kick out of seeing this world come back to life with so much pizzazz. It's going to be a feast for the eyes. At the core of it is a really human story about stepping into yourself and facing your fears. I hope that the fans really enjoy that and the experience of it and the spectacle. There will be so much to see and relish.

KATHLEEN KENNEDY

CO-PRODUCER, *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*, PRESIDENT OF LUCASFILM

BRYAN BURK

CO-PRODUCER, *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS*

***Star Wars Insider*: Kathleen, you go a long way back with George Lucas— over 30 years. How did you first meet?**

Kathleen Kennedy: I started working with Steven Spielberg in 1978, and asked to be a part of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in 1980. I met George Lucas at that time because he was working on the movie with Steven Spielberg. I also met my husband, Frank Marshall, so it proved to be a pretty exciting period of time in my life. But, George was incredibly memorable, obviously, because I was in college when I saw *Star Wars*. So, to meet George at that point, coming off the huge success of *Star Wars*, was very exciting.

Bryan, how long have you known J.J. Abrams?

Bryan Burk: I've known J.J. Abrams for years, but we actually first started working together in 2001 on the TV series *Alias* for ABC. Ever since then, we have worked on numerous projects and started Bad Robot together. We did the TV shows *Lost*, *Fringe,* and currently *Person of Interest*. On the movie side, we did the *Star Trek* reboot, as well as *Cloverfield* and *Super 8*. We also make the *Mission: Impossible* franchise with Tom Cruise.

Kathleen, what was it like working on *Raiders of the Lost Ark*?

Kathleen Kennedy: We started *Raiders* in 1980 and then went on to do three movies together. We all stayed very close friends in that process, because, obviously Steven and George were already very close. So, our working relationship extended beyond *Raiders* and into *Star Wars*. In fact, when we were casting *Raiders*, George had just come out with *The Empire Strikes Back*, and we kept thinking to ourselves that Harrison Ford would be perfect as Indiana Jones, but we couldn't cast him because he's Han Solo. So, we all walked in to see *The Empire Strikes Back* together and we walked out of the theater and agreed that he did need to be Indiana Jones. It's pretty amazing to think Harrison has developed a character as beloved as Han Solo and at the same time created Indiana Jones.

Whose idea was it to make the new *Star Wars* films?

George Lucas and I sat down right when I came to the company, and we started talking about what VII, VIII, and IX might be. Obviously, George had given this a lot of thought beforehand. He had created the first six films, and it's something that had evolved over his entire life. So, he had strong feelings about where those stories would go, and he had created the world in which those stories could be told. But I have to hand it to our writers, Michael Arndt, J.J. Abrams, and Lawrence Kasdan, because they really took everything that George gave us and worked it, and took it to the level that we've made the movie. I think they found a very exciting story that honors all those things that George so meticulously created.

Did you have any reservations about bringing the franchise back?

I think what's been thrilling about this experience is that every person who has come to the project has been a huge *Star Wars* fan. So, that's anybody who grew up with *Star Wars*, like J.J. Abrams and many of the contemporaries that he's worked with on the film. Anybody who was post-high school, college age, like me, were still bringing a sense of nostalgia. Then, there were younger people. Some of the people that I was working with on this film never saw the original *Star Wars* in the theater. So, it's this cross-generational group of people who are bringing all those sensibilities to the making of this movie. That's what is so incredibly exciting. It makes you feel like you're in this with so many people who genuinely care about it, that it's all going to be okay. The fans are sitting out there wondering what we're going to do with it, and everybody inside the process is a fan. So, you've extended out to this community that is becoming a part of making the movie. So, even though there's no guarantee, and there's stress and expectation, I think it's something genuinely we feel that we're in together. It's nice to be involved in a movie that everyone cares so much about. It's not just that they care because they're a fan, but it had something to do with their life. It's something they've drawn from. It's the reason they got into the movie business. That, to me, just means it will show up on the screen one way or another.

How did you first meet J.J. Abrams?

I was working with Steven Spielberg early in my career. This goes back 30 years ago. There were two boys written up in the *LA Times* who had won a video contest. I told Steven we should hire these two kids and they could clean up his student films and transfer them to video tape. He agreed,

"I THINK THE WRITERS FOUND A VERY EXCITING STORY THAT HONORS ALL THOSE THINGS GEORGE LUCAS CREATED."—KATHLEEN KENNEDY

and we hired them. The two 16-year-old boys who walked into the office were J.J. Abrams and Matt Reeves. Matt has gone on to be a big director/producer. And J.J., I have to say from the moment we met him, it was very clear he was going to have quite a career in the movie business. It's strange to meet someone at that point in their life and then have that person play such an important role, not only in my life, but in their life and in this whole world of *Star Wars*. He never dreamed at 16 that he'd be directing a *Star Wars* movie. I certainly never dreamed that I'd be producing a *Star Wars* movie, or running Lucasfilm. It's interesting to think about those moments in your life when there's a collision that happens, and you don't know what the outcome may be. This is one of a shared experience. It's nice to be at this point where I can work with J.J. and know him as a fully-formed creative director. There really aren't photos of them back then, because none of us really took note of it. Steven and J.J. ended up working on *Super 8*, but it all started when we hired them to transfer these films!

How did you get J.J. Abrams to agree to direct?

I had never talked to J.J. personally about *Star Wars*. I thought that once I got in a room and had a chance to walk through what bringing back the movies to a new generation would mean, that it would resonate with him in a different way. Rather than, "Would you take a beloved franchise and bring it back?" That was something that J.J. did with *Star Trek*, and I knew that wouldn't be something that would be appealing to him. With this, I knew it was something that was personal to him, so we talked about what it meant to him. What it meant to me. What he could do with it.

Bryan, how did you hear that Lucasfilm would be making new *Star Wars*?

Bryan Burk: When we first found out about it, we, like everybody, read that Lucasfilm was going to Disney and that Kathy Kennedy was going to be heading up the company and that there were going to be new *Star Wars* films, so we were over the moon just purely as fans. We were excited. The idea of our getting involved was not something we were even thinking about at the time. I first heard about it when J.J. was contacted by Kathy and he said that she was interested in meeting with him and talking to him about the project. It still felt like an impossibility and something that other people would do, but we would be the first people in line to see that movie. The fact that it actually came to fruition and we're involved in it is still amazing. To be honest, for us, the idea of taking on *Star Wars*, having just worked on the *Star Trek* films, really didn't feel like a conflict at all. Other than having one word shared in their titles, they're completely different films and even genres. *Star Trek* is obviously much more of a science-fiction film and *Star Wars* feels much more fantasy. But the similarities are so far and vast that I don't think, when people see the movie, that they will see any similarity between them. We love them separately and equally.

Kathleen, why were you convinced J.J. Abrams was the man for the job?

Kathleen Kennedy: J.J. was certainly one of my first choices. I think *Star Wars* has this unique sensibility; this combination of adventure and fantasy and humor. I think there are very few directors who embody all of those sensibilities as an artist. J.J. is one of the few. He was one of the first people I thought of when we were discussing it.

Why was it important to get Lawrence Kasdan to co-write?

I knew Larry during *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. He is one of the icons of the *Star Wars* series. His sensibility inside these movies is unique. Larry brings to it a sense of humor, but there's an irony in the humor. It's an emotional depth in the humor. He understands characters, and understands that banter. He's a real film noir buff and looks back at that fast-talking, 1930s style of dialogue. He infuses that in a very modern way in *Star Wars*.

Why did you come back to shoot at Pinewood Studios?

In large part, this is the home of *Star Wars*. All six of the previous films were made in England. I think returning to the UK and setting up at Pinewood, and working with these crews, and generations of people who go back to the early days of *Star Wars* brings a sensibility to the process that's pretty great. It's nice to have it all back here.

There are a lot of crew-members whose families worked on the films. How does that make you feel?

We used to laugh because George had talked about how long they'd been making *Star Wars*. The people he had hired had

DAISY RIDLEY ON KATHLEEN KENNEDY

"The first time I met her, we were talking about role models, and she seemed really approachable. It wasn't until after that meeting that I found out how many films she'd worked on. We were talking to her the other day, John Boyega and I, and she was just laughing. She's incredibly powerful and incredibly smart. She's a mother. She's caring. She's kind. She's there every day. She's not this scary person who runs the show. She's someone who's there as support, making sure we're happy. She's an incredible woman."

gotten married, had kids and those kids were now working on *Star Wars*. You do get a sense of ownership, working on the movie.

How important was it to keep the practical look of the first movies?

J.J. and I talked right away about real creatures and real sets. It's just a grounded sensibility that goes back to the first three movies. I've always had a feeling inside the world of special effects where it's so important to give the audience what's familiar. You want to ground it in what's familiar and these movies operate in a grounded way, even though the stories take place in outer space. That was important to J.J., too. What he loved more than anything, and I love, were the tactile sensibilities inside the first three movies. All of the design began with that premise. We sat down and immediately talked about what we could build for real, where could we shoot real locations and how much of the movie we could design in that way. It's pretty remarkable that we designed the majority of the film with that kind of thinking. I don't think we thought initially that we could do that, but the work that Neal Scanlan and his team have done and the artists we've been able to bring into the process just pushed it and pushed it. The technology inside that tactile world has improved to the same extent that the CG world has improved. It's been very rewarding to see what people can bring in front of the camera and to be able to look at raw footage. It seems like such a new and modern conceit to be sitting in dailies and looking at real things, instead of blue screen waiting for things to come months later. For the cast to be able to act in an environment where they've got real creatures, and sets that they can touch and interact with makes a difference. It immediately feels real.

BRYAN BURK ON KATHLEEN KENNEDY

"When I graduated from college, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my career, so I made a list of all the people that I admired whom I would want to work for. The first person on that list was Kathy Kennedy. The fact that I'm now working with her is a blessing—the best gift I can get."

Bryan, how did you insure that the film feels relevant?

Bryan Burk: The process of putting together the *Star Wars* film for us was a very natural and easy process. Particularly in the beginning, because, as fans of *Star Wars,* we just started talking about all the things that we love. All of us involved were able to articulate what we remembered from our childhood and what we loved when we went to the theater for the first time and what we experienced. If we were to see another *Star Wars* film, what is that we'd want to experience again? Really the whole process was just discussing things that we love in *Star Wars* and would want to see in the *Star Wars* sequels if we *weren't* working on it.

Kathleen, you championed Adam Driver's casting. Why was he so right for Kylo Ren?

Kathleen Kennedy: I had the good fortune of working with Adam Driver on *Lincoln*. That was my first introduction. The minute we started to realize this character of Kylo Ren, it just seemed obvious to me that he was one of those rare actors that could embody that character. J.J. didn't know him as well as I did, but the minute he met him, he instantly responded. He was one of the first people we identified, and quickly decided on. One of the most interesting things about Kylo Ren is that he's young. So often, villains in stories are damaged, troubled, older characters. To bring a character into *Star Wars* as a villain who's only 30-years-old is interesting. It takes advantage of a troubled teenage life and a back-story that we don't know much about. We recognize this tension between dark and light, which is prevalent in *Star Wars.* We can use it as a metaphor for the path from young adulthood to being an adult. Anybody is capable of having interest in the dark side, and that tension of being drawn into something that is somewhat dangerous is relatable. For audiences today, that's a new and exciting and appealing character.

When we look at our own lives, it's about the choices we make. This is a character that has made a lot of bad choices but not necessarily in the world of *Star Wars,* because that can go in any direction. This story is a mirror on the world. A lot of kids are experiencing a very troubled landscape politically and a lot of things are happening that suggest that people are being drawn in by danger, turmoil, and unrest. A lot of change seems to be going on politically in terms of world order. *Star Wars* has uniquely mirrored that in the political structure of the stories. Kylo Ren represents that dark side of society that we can be drawn to, not knowing whose side to be on and not having a clear-cut idea of what's good or bad. All of those things make for a very complex character in Kylo Ren and gives us a lot of opportunity for where we can go with the character.

> "THE WHOLE PROCESS WAS JUST DISCUSSING THINGS THAT WE WOULD WANT TO SEE IF WE *WEREN'T* WORKING ON IT."—BRYAN BURK

The cast is very diverse. Was that a conscious decision?

J.J. and I said right away that when we cast this movie, we would make it more diverse than the way you perceive *Star Wars* was made in the 1970s. We wanted to make it more reflective of society today. That ethnic mix, of course, would exist in outer space, just as it does here on Earth. We very much wanted that to be a part of a story.

How did you go about persuading the original cast to return?

George sat down with Carrie and Mark, because we had made the decision right around Celebration two years ago, in Orlando. Harrison was not there, so both George and I went to Harrison after that. He told them what the plans were. I think everybody was incredibly excited. There had been talk that there would be more movies. As much as it was a surprise, I don't think it was a shock. They knew there was always the chance there would be more movies.

Were they on board from the start?

Everybody was keen from the get-go. Everybody was keen to know what we were doing. They wanted to know who was directing and the direction of the story, but they were all excited.

Bryan, how did you begin the process of making the movie?

Bryan Burk: We started with research. Research was an interesting process for this film. First of all, because it's *Star Wars*, there are numerous people out in the world who are die-hard fans and a lot of them happen to be our friends. So we could have conversations with them and they knew about the lore and what was missing, or what had been heard to be lost in the archives or whatever it may be. So, to have the opportunity to go up to George Lucas's ranch and to go to the archives to see all this amazing artwork done by all of these amazing artists was incredible. So much of Ralph McQuarrie's work was never used, so we put it in this film. Why not? It's gorgeous and totally timeless. On top of it, meeting people like Pablo Hidalgo at Lucasfilm who are beyond experts on the world of *Star Wars*, and know everything about it, from the Legends universe to all the films, was an invaluable aid in making this film. Visiting George Lucas' archives was unlike anything I've ever seen before. It was literally a journey through my entire childhood. Seeing all of the props and costumes and artwork from some of my favorite movies growing up was amazing. It obviously includes all of the *Star Wars* films and all the different costumes; even the original Chewbacca outfit was still there, but slowly deteriorating. There was also the Ark of the Covenant from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and all the whips from the different *Indiana Jones* movies, and even stuff from *Willow*. There were so many amazing things to look at in every corner and at every turn; it's just this bombardment of inspiration. When George Lucas opens up his museum with all of his artwork and all of his memorabilia from his different movies, I think people are going to lose their minds.

How did you choose the heads of the departments?

A lot of the department heads existed before we even got involved. Rick Carter, the production designer, who is a genius, worked with Kathleen Kennedy for years on numerous movies before. He was like no production designer I'd ever worked with, in the sense that for him it wasn't just about the look of the movie, it was about the feel of the movie and the tone of the movie. We really just started talking about story with Rick, who was involved in all the story meetings throughout the

entire process. He understood the franchise and the film itself—what we wanted it to be, and what Kathy wanted it to be. We had worked with costume designer Michael Kaplan before; J.J. first worked with him on *Mission: Impossible III,* and then we worked with him on both of the *Star Trek* films as well as *Ghost Protocol*. We've been fans of Michael's forever. He began his career with *Blade Runner* and eight gazillion movies since then. So, the opportunity to work with him yet again, let alone in something as iconic and personal for all of us, was undeniable. Dan Mindel, director of photography, and his camera department, has been someone that J.J. has been working with for years. He started with him on *Mission: Impossible III* and we worked with him on the *Star Trek* films. Not only does Dan Mindel have such a beautiful eye when he's looking at things, but his entire team is a pleasure to work with. They are constantly bringing new ideas to the table, finding new ways to shoot things and constantly inventing things that we've never seen before on film. Neal Scanlan, who is a special effects artist, was another brilliant person that Kathleen brought on. There are not a lot of people who are making puppets today, let alone creatures, and let alone tangible ones. It's a craft that I'd never seen first-hand until I had the opportunity to work with Neal and his team. I'm hoping if nothing less, after the *Star Wars* films, that many other films will start embracing the long-lost craft of creating creatures and tangible co-stars.

Was it a conscious decision to carry on the tradition of using unknowns?

Whenever we do any film or TV, we often look at whether or not the project would be great with recognizable actors or would it possibly be better with less recognizable actors. Sometimes it feels like you want to bring on new people or find unknown actors so that you can go into the world a little easier and not have to undo what your brain is saying. It's like, "Oh, there's Clint Eastwood playing a rock star." In this case, when we started the casting process for *Star Wars*, we did think that we wanted to find some new actors and some fresh new faces that we could put into the *Star Wars* universe. Obviously, it worked spectacularly for George in the original films. So, in this case, we decided to continue that. When we started the casting process, our casting directors, April Webster, Alyssa Weisberg and Nina Gold were scouring all the different agencies and trying to find that needle in a haystack for those young actors for this film that we knew were out there, but we just didn't know who they were. Somewhere in the process, we realized if we had an open casting call, we would have an opportunity to see people who wouldn't normally have the opportunity to audition for *Star Wars* or who didn't have an agent. It opened up the floodgates of talent. A lot of people came through and there are some amazing people out there. Not all of them made it into the film, but it was a great experience to be able to see so many different people who were so touched by *Star Wars*.

> "I LOVE TO SNEAK IN THE BACK OF CINEMAS TO SEE THE AUDIENCES' REACTIONS!"
> —KATHLEEN KENNEDY

Kathleen, how have you made *Star Wars* deliver on so many levels?

Kathleen Kennedy: The interesting thing is, when you look at *Star Wars,* it does deliver on different levels. I think all of us were quite amazed when we started to pick it apart and discovered what incredibly good storytelling it was. How simple it was and how spare it was. And how much fun. It made us appreciate what we all have to do. We needed to understand what worked and why it resonated with so many people on so many levels. When you do a movie like this, you have to take it seriously. You can't treat it like lightweight storytelling. Everything George did was serious. It drew upon tried and true mythology, a basis of all religious thought, family values and key values around aspiration. What does it mean to make people feel like they can do anything? If they live their life well, they can achieve greatness. Those are the values and ideas inherent in *Star Wars*. You don't want to make that pedantic and pretentious, so you need to find a way to preserve those values and make it fun and have it be an adventure. That's what we spent our focus on—isolating all these elements inside the *Star Wars* mythology and doing the best job we could to emulate what George had created.

Have you ever snuck into the back of a cinema to see an audiences reaction?

Yes, I love to do that. I have quite a bit of anonymity, so I can go in the back of the cinema and watch the audience react. I just want people to scream and yell and have a great time. All you can hope for is to go back to those feelings of going to movies when you felt like you were at a rock concert. That was the best.

FROM THE WORLD OF THE HIT TV SHOW,

HEROES!

#2 ON SALE NOW

*NOT FINAL COVER

titanmagazines.com/hr2

NBC

WATCH HEROES REBORN THURSDAYS 8/7C

Heroes Reborn: Event Series is a trademark and copyright of Universal Television. Licenced by Universal Studios Licensing LLC 2015. All Rights Reserved.

TITAN MAGAZINES

THESE ARE THE DROIDS YOU ARE LOOKING FOR...

ON SALE NOW!

STAR WARS INSIDER SPECIAL EDITION 2016

148 PAGES!

FEATURING EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS & IN-DEPTH FEATURES!

TO FIND OUT MORE VISIT:
TITANMAGAZINES.COM/STARWARSINSIDER

© & ™ 2015 LUCASFILM LTD. Used Under Authorization

WATCH OUT! BB-8 IS ABOUT!

THE CAST AND CREW OF *STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS* ON WORKING WITH THE SAGA'S NEWEST ICON!

JOHN BOYEGA

"BB-8 is amazing. BB-8 is so cute and charismatic... and a little bit feisty. I'm starting to wonder if R2-D2 is a distant cousin. BB-8 is lovely to work with. I have to talk about BB-8 as an actor, because BB-8 is actually there on set. It's puppetry; it's animatronics, and BB-8 is a combination of both. It's been amazing working with BB-8. Sometimes he's rude and has to work on his attitude a bit. But, as a droid that just got this part, he has a long way to go..."

OSCAR ISAAC

"His design is amazing. I believe J.J. Abrams actually came up with the design, which is so ingenious, because it feels like I've seen it before. It feels like it's familiar to the *Star Wars* universe, but it's not; It's completely new. The fact that it's a ball that moves around, it looks like he has a little belly; it's very cute, but he's so expressive because of that, and has so much more room for expression. He really comes to life, and they have so many different versions of him. They have a puppeteer who's in a blue suit or green suit, and there's one by himself that's remote controlled, and there's a stationary one."

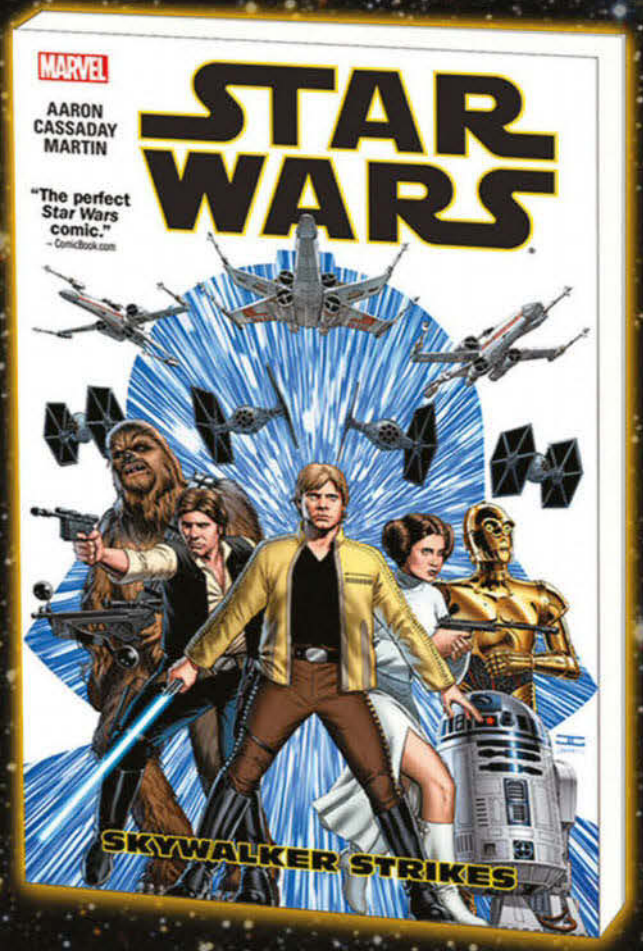
ANTHONY DANIELS

"One of the really great things, and it took me totally by surprise, was BB-8. I was on the set, and I'm watching this droid coming to life in front of me in motion capture. I'm only a few feet away and there's a guy dressed entirely in green, acting. But I still couldn't understand how BB-8 functions. I was instantly enchanted. Then we move on and now I'm in a scene with *me*, but BB-8 is such a star it's like I'm in a scene with him. He's the most delightful character. BB-8. You'd expect me to say BB-8 is in a scene with me, but BB-8 is such Sorry, R-2, eat your heart out. I think people are going to fall in love with particularly since this is such a diverse universe. There are many creatures on this set, BB-8. There's something there. There are creatures of every shape and weirdness, and mechanics. There are humanoid aliens of every single color and shape and quality. The diversity will help people to dive into it, because there's something there for everybody. But I think BB-8 will get all the [great] reviews. Anyone acting in a scene with BB-8 should watch out!"

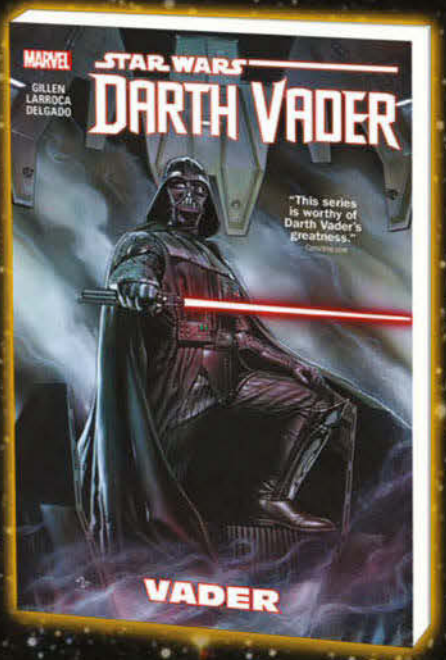
DAISY RIDLEY

"Meeting BB-8 was tricky, because I hadn't worked with a person on screen, let alone a little droid. It was so tricky at first, but it made acting with other characters easier much later on."

READ THE ACCLAIMED TALES THAT HAVE SOLD OVER 3.5 MILLION COMIC UNITS.



STAR WARS VOL. 1: SKYWALKER STRIKES TPB
978-0-7851-9213-8



DARTH VADER VOL. 1: VADER TPB
978-0-7851-9255-8

PRINCESS LEIA TPB
978-0-7851-9317-3

GRAPHIC NOVELS ON SALE NOW

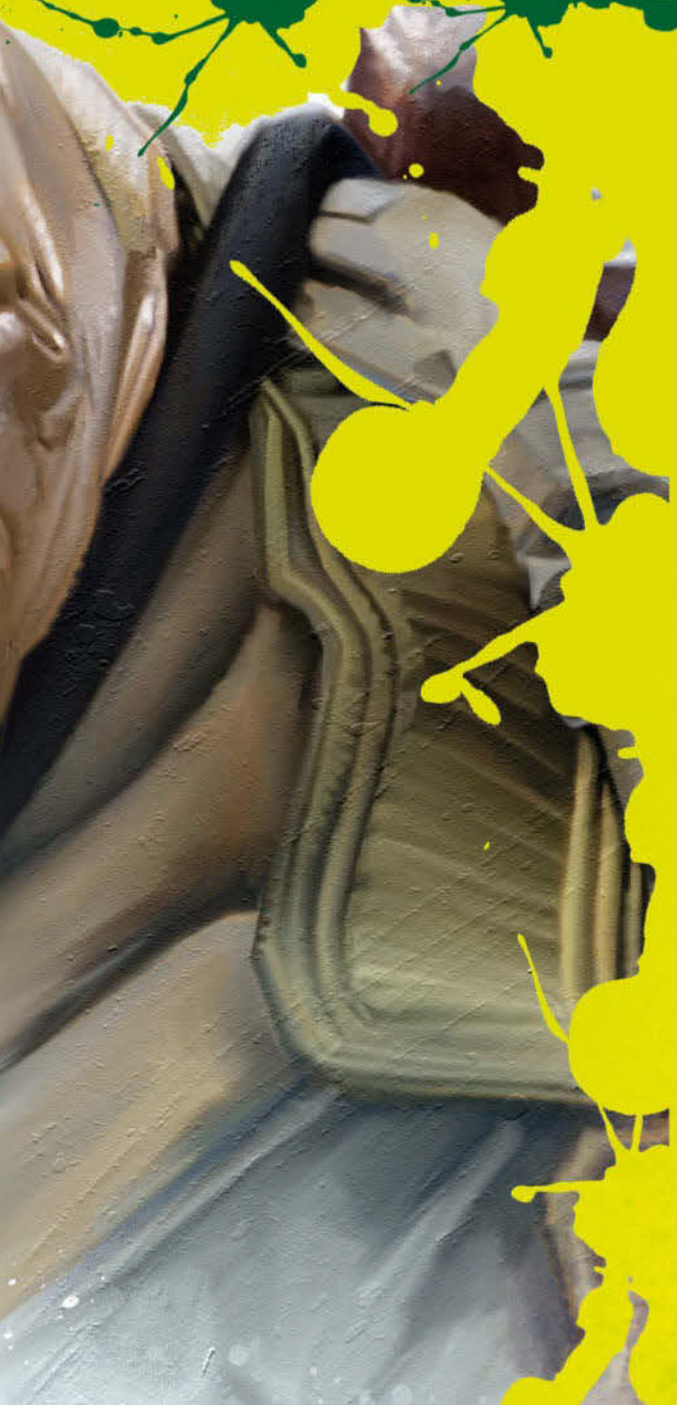
IN PRINT & DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD.
TO FIND A COMIC SHOP NEAR YOU, VISIT WWW.COMICSHOPLOCATOR.COM OR CALL 1-888-COMICBOOK.

MARVEL Disney | LUCASFILM

© & TM 2015 LUCASFILM LTD.

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

BAIT



BY ALAN DEAN FOSTER
WITH ART BY BRIAN ROOD

One of the keys to enabling a big guy to conceal himself, Grummgar knew, was finding ways for him to get around without attracting much attention. Consequently, the specialized hunting speeder he was currently straddling wasn't much bigger than he was.

And Grummgar was a very big guy indeed. Hence the need for the remarkably compact, yet powerful, speeder. With its customized muted propulsion system and integrated heat masker, it was particularly useful for slipping unnoticed in and out of one of his favorite hunting grounds: the sacred jungles of Ithor. The fact that hunting within Ithor's expansive boundaries was highly illegal did not deter him. Very little dissuaded Grummgar from pursuing his goals, be they the occasional trophy he kept for his personal pleasure or, in this case, that he acquired for a client.

Coming from a world where physical attributes and skills were valued above all others, he had developed his own to a point where he had some time ago felt confident striking out alone. Given the current condition of galactic society following the fall of the Empire and the ongoing confusion within the New Republic, being one's own boss and beholden to no one placed him in an enviable position. He could go where he wished, when he wished, and do as he pleased. Among other things, it allowed him to spend time with some less than savory acquaintances, on out-of-the-way worlds, and generally thumb his nose at the authorities. Which, considering the size of his nose, was no small challenge.

Besides, due to their gruff personalities, as well as their intimidating appearance, his kind were not noted for an ability to socialize easily.

Shifting his massive, bronze-hued body atop the speeder, he reached up with one huge hand to wipe raindrops from, first, the right, then, the left, of the twin blunt, short tusks that protruded from his face. His large black eyes sank even deeper beneath a cliff-like brow as he studied the opening in the forest below and in front of him. His other hand held the heavy 242 hunting rifle as lightly as if it were a toy. No plaything, the 242 fired a propulsive shell that could bring down a full-grown rancor.

As he adjusted his upper body position, his armored gray shoulder pads shifted slightly. Located near a clean, flowing stream and replete with a carpet of blue and pink edible fungi, the dappled glade he was observing through his magscope was just where one might hope to find the deadly molsume, its iridescent fur glistening in the sunlight to warn potential predators that the flesh of the rare multi-legged creature was as toxic as the poison that seeped from its twin fangs. Grummgar had no intention of eating his quarry, of course. The client for whom he was working wanted only the jewel-like pelt for his collection.

There was just one small problem.

The glade was already occupied.

Professional hunter and wide-ranging traveler that he was, Grummgar recognized the intruding species immediately. It was a human female, and to all appearances, one that was as young as she was diminutive. She sat tickling the native fungi, ignoring its food value, laughing at the small sounds it made, and for all the world, as indifferent to her potentially dangerous surroundings as if she were enjoying a picnic in a city park.

Where had she come from? Grummgar pondered. She looked too young to be out in the Ithor jungle by herself, the sizeable backpack lying nearby notwithstanding. Though this individual did not appear to be fully adult, he knew that human body sizes could be deceptive. A large one could be young, a small one quite old.

Not that her size or age mattered. What was important was that she was occupying the site he had chosen for his stakeout. She would have to be moved, or....

He considered thoughtfully. Why move her? What better to entice a highly carnivorous molsume than a bit of vulnerable bipedal bait? He ought to help her, he knew. At the very least, warn her that in taking her ease where she was, she was inviting destruction. On the other hand, as near as he could tell, she was here of her own free will, and had not been dumped or otherwise forcibly ejected into this part of the jungle. Certainly her present demeanor appeared to confirm that.

In the end, it came down to what was strictly a business decision, he thought, as he easily swung the big gun around to rest on his protruding belly. Murmuring softly to himself, he checked to make sure the 242 had a full load at the ready. After that, he continued to hover above the forest on the silent speeder, continued to watch—and waited.

The Ithorian sun was low in the sky when he detected motion in the dense copse of n'lor trees. Rubbing the back of a huge hand across his wide, flat nostrils, he let the magscope automatically adjust to the distance and the ambient light. A flash of dark purple glistened among the greenery. As it moved, the coloring shifted to a metallic azure streaked with silver, then to bright bronze flecked with emerald green. While he could not see the outline of the creature, the glimmering between the branches was sufficient to identify the molsume. It was moving slowly and steadily toward the stream. Or toward its intended prey.

Repositioning the scope, he saw that the girl had not changed her location. She continued to sit in the middle of the glade, surrounded by colorful fungi, native flowers, and blissful indifference. There was still time to warn her, but he would have to hurry. Once it scented food, the molsume could attack with blinding speed.

Below, the onward flow of glistening colors came to a halt. Doubtless, the creature was taking the measure of the strange potential meal in front of it. It was possible, even likely, that the girl was the first example of her species the molsume had ever seen. Grummgar knew she would be little more than a snack for the monster. Judging by the number and intensity of coat colors he had already seen, it was a mature specimen. Bigger than himself, and far bigger than the girl. Just what his client was looking for.

Perhaps, he thought for an instant, his client would be interested in a human skin, as well. He immediately flicked the notion aside. One did not sell the shell of a fellow sentient to be stuffed or hung on a wall. While even among his own kind Grummgar was regarded as something of a rough customer, he did have principles. These excluded hunting other intelligent beings. They did not exclude allowing them to be taken by less clever but more robust predatory native species.

> If her intent was to provoke him, it failed. Grummgar did not take offense at words. To do so would have him involved in far too many uneccessary conflicts.

Putting aside the scope, he unlimbered his rifle and began to take aim. Aware that the molsume would go straight for the human, he aimed just to her left. That was the direction from which the carnivore would charge. If the girl was lucky, he would kill the creature with a single shot and, through no intent of his own, she would survive. Otherwise, it might take several bursts to put the tough predator down, which would be...untidy.

The slight rustling of vines and branches would not have been noticed by prey, but Grummgar was alert to the movement immediately. The molsume was tensing, preparing all ten of its short but powerful legs for the killing charge. It came even sooner than he anticipated. Not for nothing was his client prepared to pay highly for the pelt of so dangerous a creature. A single shot rang out.

It did not come from his rifle.

Still gazing through the magscope, he lowered it slightly. A long wheeze came from his capacious lungs as his brain tried to fully process the couple of seconds it had just recorded.

The molsume had sprung. Before it was halfway to her the girl had whirled, knocked aside her backpack, picked up the expensive and very powerful shortblaster the pack had been concealing, and fired. The single shell it unleashed had detonated just under the molsume's lower jaw, sending teeth, fangs, and a spray of poison flying in all directions while shattering the creature's brain.

Grummgar let out an involuntary snort of admiration. Despite the evident delight she had had exhibited in her bucolic surroundings, it was clear the girl was far from the helpless waif she had initially appeared to be. He was grateful for what she had accomplished, and would tell her so. But he would approach her carefully, carefully. He was well aware that other species found his bulk and appearance intimidating.

Not this girl, however. In response to the speeder's descent, she swiftly swung the shortblaster in its direction. He paused with alacrity, the soft hum of his vehicle almost inaudible above the background chatter of the Ithorian jungle. He strove to recall a dialect one of her kind would find comprehensible.

"Take it early," he rumbled. No, that wasn't it. He tried again. "Take it easy. Yes, relax." Though the absence of much of a neck prevented him from executing more than perfunctory nod, he managed to indicate the oversized handgun she now gripped firmly in both small hands. "I don't fully garner your intent, but if it's hostile, remember that's a one-shot weapon."

"Two." The muzzle of the gun did not waver. "Specially modified model. Two shots."

He considered. "And if I evade, and you miss?"

Compared to his, her mouth slit was so small as to be nearly invisible. "I don't miss."

"Do you brag as skillfully as you hunt?"

A thin smile creased the flat human face. "You know how to find out."

He was careful to keep the end of the 242 aimed away from her. But not terribly far away. "It seems we have arrived at an impasse."

"No," she countered brusquely. "*You've* arrived at an impasse. My name's Nysorly, and *I've* arrived in the Ithor jungle, where I've been hunting for a molsume for nearly a week. I'm going to skin it, freezerve the pelt, and sell it."

"You are a professional hunter?" Grummgar's massive overhanging brow rose. "I've put out bait bigger than you."

"I wouldn't be surprised," she shot back. "Something as big and clumsy as yourself would likely have to resort to bait."

"I am perfectly familiar with the full range of human expressions," he muttered as he drew near. "I'm not amused by the one you are currently displaying."

If her intent was to provoke him, it failed. Grummgar did not take offense at words. To do so would involve him in far too many unnecessary conflicts. For him, if there was no money or trophy in it, there was no rationale for fighting.

"You could shoot me," he hypothesized, "and I could fall off this speeder and crush you."

She indicated the now half-decapitated carcass of the molsume. "You've seen how fast I can move. Surely, you're not that stupid."

"I only have to hit you once, noisy stripling."

The muzzle of the shortblaster twitched ever so slightly.

"With how many amputated body parts?"

She was serious, he realized. Of all the obstacles he had prepared to deal with on this expedition, of all the potential problems and setbacks and possible unforeseen complications, the last thing he had expected to have to confront was competition. And pocket-sized competition, at that.

But there was nothing undersized about her gun.

"I *could* kill you," he murmured off-handedly, "but I dislike a mess."

"You'll make a bigger one."

"Instead of watching and waiting, I could have ignored the situation in the hope that the moslume would take you."

Her grin returned. "Isn't that what you hoped would happen?"

"Not really. I was intending to put it down before it could reach you."

"So, my actual survival was a matter of some indifference to you?"

Once again he managed a limited-range nod. "You wound me. In all honesty, I did have a preference." As he spoke, his free hand was drifting imperceptibly toward the speeder's control panel.

"How noble of you." Her sarcasm was blunt enough for him to recognize it for what it was. "So. What do we do now?"

"I suppose," he replied, "one of us is going to kill the other."

Whereas his size did not unnerve her, his calmness did. "Seems kind of an extreme solution." Once again, she indicated

the gleaming cadaver. "All over a single molsume pelt. Why don't we just split the proceeds?"

He considered. "Your buyer or mine?"

"Easy," she replied. He could see that some of the overriding tension was leaving her. "Highest bidder."

He grunted. "I have a reputation to consider. But I do have a solution." He spat in her direction.

Being unfamiliar with the possible dangers that might be englobed in the mass of alien spittle, she threw herself to one side, firing as she went down. Grummgar raised the 242 and let loose, but her shot fragmented the rear section of the speeder, sending it spinning wildly to crash into a nearby johinuu tree.

The carnivorous tree immediately tried to eat the speeder. Finding it distinctly unpalatable, not to mention hot, it spit out the smoking vehicle and its rider.

As Nysorly rolled, she grabbed the backpack and in one smooth motion emptied it of a cartridge holding two of the shortblaster's explosive shells. She was in the process of reloading when she saw something behind her and at her feet. The mass of shimmering fur contrasted brutally with the gaping mouth and its long, pointed teeth and poison fangs. Both double-slitted eyes were open and fixed on her. A freshly-minted dark hole between them was smoldering.

She continued to reload the shortblaster, but with less haste now. Rising, she peered in the direction of the still-quivering johinnu tree. Instead of aiming her weapon in its vicinity, she let it hang loose at her side.

"Hey." There was no response. Brushing colorful leaves and grit from her jumpsuit, she took a couple of steps toward the smoke that was rising from near the tree. "Hey, big guy—you okay?" She glanced back. If Grumm hadn't detected the other molsume, it would have torn her to shreds.

A shape rose from among green and rust-hued bushes. Covered in the residue from a large quantity of smooshed fungi, it had the rainbow appearance of a moslume pelt but without any of the iridescence. As this colorful mass staggered in her direction, still clutching the hunting rifle and with several mushroom-like growths dangling decoratively from one facial tusk, she fought hard to repress a smile and failed.

"I am perfectly familiar with the full range of human expressions," he muttered as he drew near. "I am not amused by the one you are currently displaying."

"You should be." Putting a hand over her mouth, she stifled a laugh. "If you're looking for suitable camouflage so you can do some more local hunting, I wouldn't change a thing. Provided a hungry toscwon doesn't try to lick you to death first." Her tone softened and she finally lowered her hand as she gazed up at him. "Thank you for saving my life."

"There is no need for thanks. As has already been pointed out, such was not my intent." She tensed as he started to raise the 242, but it was to use it to point at the molsume he had just killed. "I said that I had a solution. We now each have a kill, and as a consequence each of our clients will be satisfied."

Looking back at the second, even larger carnivore that now lay sprawled in the clearing, she nodded. "I thought you were —I thought...."

"That I was about to shoot you in order to take your kill?" Deep-set ebon eyes stared down at her. She could not read them. "If the second molsume had not appeared, who knows?"

Her smile returned, but it was a different kind of smile this time. One of understanding rather than amusement.

"I know the answer to that. Even if you won't admit to it."

"I make no comment." The huge body expanded, then contracted, in a vast sigh. "If you can tell that, then you are more in the knowing of things than I am."

"I've had to be." She looked away from him. "I've been on my own since I was sixteen. I had no choice."

He gestured. "I understand. That is the destiny of most Dowutins. So we have something in common besides hunting. Come. You have the frail bone structure of a calcified infant. I will help you gut your heavy trophy."

"And you have the hands of an automated cargo loader. I'll help you skin your kill so those clumsy roast-size fingers don't ruin the pelt." As they started toward the first dead moslume she looked up at him curiously. "You ever work with a partner?"

"Not when I'm hunting," he told her. "Sometimes—for other things. I have other business interests."

"What other interests?" she asked, refusing to let the matter lie.

The massive, bald skull turned to gaze down at her. "None of your concern, stripling. Be glad I don't skin you, as well."

"You're as tactful as you are friendly," she growled, turning away.

"It is my nature," he told her serenely. "By the way, the cost of my speeder is coming out of your bounty."

MORE TO SAY

The *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* ebook by Alan Dean Foster is available now, with the hardcover edition on sale January 5, 2016 from Del Rey.

HAVE YOU?

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title: Star Wars Insider 2. Publication Number: 0003-0027 3. Filing Date: 10-1-15 4. Issue Frequency: Bi-monthly 5.Number of Issues Published Annually: 8 6. Annual Subscription Price: $49.99 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 2819 Rosehall Ln. Aurora, IL 60503
Contact Person: John Dziewiatkowski 630-841-3349 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 2819 Rosehall Ln. Aurora IL 60503 9. Full names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Publisher: Nick Landau Editor: Jonathan Wilkins Managing Editor: Darryl Tothill Address: 144 Southwark St., London England, SE1 0UP 10. Owner: Titan Publishing Group LLC. Nick Landau, Vivian Cheung 144 Southwark St. London, England, SE1 0UP 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None. 12. Tax Status Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months, The purpose, function, and non-profit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months 13. Publication Title: Star Wars Insider 14. Issue Date for Circulation Date Below: Jan – Nov/Dec (Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months). Extent and Nature of Circulation: Paid 15. a). Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 47,086 b. (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions: 4,935 (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated: 0 (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Courier Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: 34,940 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 700 c. Total Paid Distribution: 40,575 d. and e. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 0 f. Total Distribution: 40,575 g. Copies not Distributed: 18,723 h. Total: 59,298 i. Percent Paid: 100 14. Issue Date for Circulation Date Below: Nov/Dec (No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date). Extent and Nature of Circulation: Paid 15 a). Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 37,953 b. (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions: 5,596 (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated: 0 (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Courier Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: 30,603 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 0 c. Total Paid Distribution: 36,199 d. and e. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 0 f. Total Distribution: 36,199 g. Copies not Distributed: 16,704 h. Total: 52,903 i. Percent Paid: 100 16. N/A 17. Statement included in: Issue 162 18. Completed by: John Dziewiakowski, Publisher

THE SAGA CONTINUES....

NEXT ISSUE

BB-8 ANATOMY OF A DROID!

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS
Reaction and reviews!

SIMON PEGG ON STAR WARS!
Jokes from Jakku

OBI-WAN KENOBI
A Jedi's journey continues

STAR WARS REBELS
Season Two latest

RADIO DAYS
The director of the classic *Star Wars* Radio Drama interviewed!

STAR WARS INSIDER

Subscribe today at www.titanmagazines.com U.S. 866-205-0034 U.K. 0844 322 1280

U.S. NEWSSTANDS: February 02 U.K. NEWSAGENTS: February 04

BRIAN'S TOYS

Order online now at
WWW.BRIANSTOYS.COM

Home of the World's Largest Selection of Star Wars Collectibles from 1977 to Present.

All-New Force FX Lightsabers
Kylo Ren, Yoda, Luke Skywalker, and Darth Vader

The Force Awakens 6" Wave 1 (Set of 5)

The Force Awakens 6" Wave 3 (Set of 6)

The Force Awakens 3.75" Jungle & Space Wave (Set of 6)

The Force Awakens 3.75" Snow & Desert Wave (Set of 6)

VINTAGE STAR WARS

POTF Luke Stormtrooper AFA 85Y

12 Back-C Darth Vader AFA 85Y

POTF Anakin Skywalker AFA 80Y

ESB 41 Back-A Boba Fett AFA 75

Death Star Space Station Playset AFA 80

ESB 32 Back-B Yoda AFA 85

HOT TOYS Sixth Scale Force Awakens Figures
Coming in 2016

Kylo Ren - $224.99
Snowtrooper - $214.99
Snowtrooper Officer - $219.99
TIE Pilot - $199.99
Heavy Gunner - $219.99
Stormtrooper - $204.99

SELL YOUR TOYS!

Use our easy selling tools to turn your Star Wars collection into cash!

Find out more at brianstoys.com/sellyourtoys

FREE SHIPPING *on domestic orders over $35*

Brian's Toys, Inc.
W730 State Road 35
Fountain City, WI 54629
USA

web: www.brianstoys.com
email: sales@brianstoys.com
phone: (608) 687-7572 ext. 1
fax: (608) 687-7573

© & TM 2014 LUCASFILMLTD

Prices and availability are subject to change. Please call, fax, or e-mail to confirm prices and availability.

STAR WARS™
CARD TRADER
BY Topps

Collect your favorite characters from across the *Star Wars*™ universe.

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google play

Download for **FREE** on iPhone, iPad and Android

Star Wars™ and related properties are trademarks and/or copyrights, in the United States and other countries, of Lucasfilm Ltd. and/or its affiliates. © & TM Lucasfilm Ltd.. © 2015 The Topps Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved. TOPPS® AND *STAR WARS*™ CARD TRADER℠ ARE TRADEMARKS OF THE TOPPS COMPANY, INC. Apple, the Apple logo, iPad, and iPhone are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc.